HONORIA
OR
THE GOSPEL OF A LIFE

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HONORIA;

OR,

THE GOSPEL OF A LIFE.

BY

ROSE PORTER,

AUTHOR OF "SUMMER DRIFTWOOD," "CHARITY, SWEET CHARITY," ETC.

35

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NEW YORK:
ANSON D. F. RANDOLPH & COMPANY,
900 BROADWAY, COR. 20th STREET.

1885.

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EDWARD O. JENKINS' SONS,
Printers and Stereotypers,
20 North William St., New York.

Remember,

"The dear Lord's best interpreters
Are humble human souls;
The Gospel of a Life—
Is more than books or scrolls."

—WHITTIER.

"GOSPEL is a large word; and if it really is what it calls itself, it should be able to tell us, not only how to escape penalties, but how to win righteousness; how to live, as well as how to die; what we may enjoy, as well as what we must surrender."

"Every blessing of the Gospel is *new*. It is itself a *New* Testament, it proposes a *new* birth, it makes a *new* creature. It brings *new* joy, it creates *new* hope, it imparts *new* strength, it reveals *new* light, and it sets before us a *new* Heaven, and a *new* earth, it is emphatically *newness* of life."—THOROLD.

PART I.

PRELUDE.

"ALAS!" cried the princess, "I can never find the door, nor enter the golden cavern; it has been closed for thousands of years, and it will remain closed forever."

Then spake the hermit, asking: "What flowers are these which thou holdest?"

The princess made reply:

"Only primroses, may-keys, and tulips."—

And the hermit bowed his head, as softly he murmured:

"Primroses, may-keys, and tulips! a maiden's scepter. Fear not, princess, the door will open; all you have to do is to touch the Rock with the flowers of the Spring.

"Remember, touch the Rock, and the door will open."

HONORIA.

I.

THE gospel of a Life! Honoria Lambert's life.—How shall I tell it, when the word, Life, lays its touch of mystery on the very threshold of my page?

Life! that never-ending existence which our earth-trammeled language is as powerless to bound as we are to bind the course of "the wind which bloweth where it listeth, and no man knoweth whence it cometh or whither it goeth."—Life! No wonder our own poet, Whittier, writes—"Life is a mystery, death is a mystery," thus echoing the words of the old-time philosopher.

Do you remember how the record tells, when the wise men asked Confucius, "What is death?" the sage replied, "Life is such a mystery that I do not look to penetrate what is beyond it."—And shall we strive to be wiser than philosopher and poet?

No—we leave it, the silent Hereafter, a mystery, vast, unfathomable; but we sign it, with the sign of the Cross, and in the shadow of the Cross—Christ's Cross—eyes that now are holden, can yet read the promise—"What ye know not now, ye shall know hereafter." Only trust—and wait.—"Why seek ye the living among the dead?"

But the story of Honoria, must it be veiled in mystery, because it is a life-story?—and thus a story we can not follow into the Beyond?

I think not, for there need be no mystery about it, except in that subtle way, in which what we term the guidance of Providence, is a 'Veiled Angel.' Providence! it is a word often misunderstood, but when once appreciated, ah think! how it fills life with the Heavenly chorus of "Peace, be still"—"I am with thee." Think, too, in our own lives how often we meet 'Veiled Angels'—the "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister."—Full well

> "We know how radiant and how kind
> Their faces are those veils behind;

We trust those veils one happy day,
In heaven and earth shall pass away."

Aught else there may be of mystery in Honoria's story nature will serve to explain, for though nature in its working is ever a mystery, nevertheless it is an "open secret," a constant revelation full of the significance of seed-time and harvest, blossom and fruit.

Taking then this kindly teacher for a guide, I will begin my tale with the years that encompassed Honoria's childhood.—Years that were so full of gladness, all her life long they were framed in the golden frame of happy memories, thus running parallel with the story of nature's season of "golden glories," the joyous spring-time, when

"The buttercup is like a golden cup,
The marigold is like a golden frill,
The daisy with a golden eye looks up,
And golden spreads the flag beside the rill,
And gay and golden nods the daffodil,
The gorsey common swells a golden sea,
The cowslip hangs a head of golden tips,
And golden drips the honey which the bee
Sucks from sweet hearts of flowers and stores
and sips."

II.

AS I tell you the story of Honoria's dawning years, come, let us unlatch the gate, and together enter the garden where in childhood her baby feet chased the butterflies as she played among the flowers, and where her baby laugh, that "joy-hymn" of childhood, made music sweeter than the song of birds,—the garden, where thoughts entered the child's soul, too, and where imagination began to unfold its mystic lore long before she knew aught of printed page, or the knowledge learned from books.

This garden-bounded life rounded out full ten years, before she knew aught either, of the knowledge learned from frequent intercourse with playmates of her own age; or from mingling with those comers and goers between home and the outer world—the older folk—from whom children are wont to receive impressions as easily as a strong hand moulds

pliant wax. For childhood is a time when impressions are received as unconsciously as sunlight is absorbed.

But none of these influences surrounded Honoria.

The daily companionship of her grandparents, the home walls, the home garden, and the far-away look-out places pointed toward by the points of the compass, these meant the world for this child. And yet—it was a full world. Think of all it held and suggested.

There were dense forests Westward where stately pines and hemlocks grew, and from where she heard the hammers of the great stone quarries resounding through the woods, a sound that gave Honoria her first thought of manual labor.—Southward, stretched the marsh meadows, where colors gleamed in every shade of vivid green, rusty red, and sombre brown.—Northward, the boundary line of Honoria's seeing was shut in by high hills; and Eastward, ah, that to the child was the wonder-place, for the oceanward side is where the Harbor leads out to the broad Atlantic.

It is a varied coast-line about Harbor-town, full of picturesque combinations; the bank for a mile or more as it stretches away from the town is an almost unbroken sandy low-lying shore; near and about the hamlet, where the fisher-folk dwell, it is one continuous succession of bays and coves, where the water gleams in hues blue as the sky, and where bold headlands—venturesome promontories—dart far out into the wide plain of sea water; while white-capped waves dash on those rocks in never-ceasing play, or roll up over the smooth gray sand in a thousand breaking ripplets. And then, out beyond, there are the great masses of red granite-boulders, piled up the one against another in infinite confusion, and extending for full half a mile of broken reef and treacherous coast.—A coast, whence the Harbor lights shine forth as soon as ever the sun sinks behind the forest tree-tops over Westward.

These sights, with the white sails of ships far off on the open sea, the out-going, and incoming of fishing fleets, or the near sail of

pilot-boat guiding home-leaving or home-returning vessel across the Harbor bar, made the poetry of Honoria Lambert's day-dreams.

And when twilight deepened, and night enfolded in its mantle of shadows, scenes near and far; then, the sky was her companion. Though the sky was a friend by day as well as by night for that matter.—An ever-meaningfull friend, whether she gazed up into the depth of the over-arching blue dome, or watched the gathering of the cloud-pictures, made sometimes of fleecy vapor, that gradually blended into white far-reaching cloud-banks; and sometimes of the scudding cloudlets that indicated a near rainfall. In truth so well Honoria loved her upward looks, well-nigh from babyhood she was familiar with the signs of the sky, the significance of halo, rainbow, corona and fog. But best of all she loved the starry firmament by night, when the new moon, or the full moon reigned Queen, and when, glory of all, the sun still held sway in its reflected light of day-time shining.

And yet, even then, though she was only a

ten-year-old child, she wanted something more, she wanted the Heart of it all. And so her search began, her search after the Heart of Life.

Did she find it?——Do we any of us find it?

There is but one way, and that a well-worn path, old as the centuries eighteen hundred and more, since the Christ said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

III.

FULL twenty years before Honoria's life began, Squire Lambert and his wife had come, strangers from over the sea, and to the astonishment of rich and poor, they had chosen for a settling-place the sea-port hamlet—Harbor-town. In fact, when the turreted roof and many-windowed walls of the red-brick mansion had been reared it had seemed a veritable folly to build so spacious a dwelling in that remote place.

For in those days, and even on till a time long after Honoria's arrival, the chief contact Harbor-town inhabitants had with the busy life of the world was limited to the semi-annual arrival—fresh from the Banks—of a whaling vessel, or fleet of fishing smacks, and the coming of now one, and then another of Captain Jacob Forbes' schooners, bringing mails bearing dates sometimes a week, and

sometimes a month old. News, too, was almost as slow in coming from the villages, that like daisies in the grass studded that Eastern coast. Yes—certainly it was a strange place for a man like Squire Lambert in the vigor of his life to choose for a home-nest.

Naturally, from the fact of remoteness and freedom from exciting events, any unusual occasion was hailed in Harbor-town as affording a topic for long-lasting discussion. It was thus with the Squire's arrival, and later when little Honoria came.

This latter event was so full of interest, for many a month afterward,—on every return trip of the schooner, *Sea Foam*,—Captain Forbes' wife was sure to find eager listeners to her tale, of the gentle-voiced lady who had placed the baby-girl in her motherly arms with the oft repeated injunction: "Take the child to Harbor-town, and give her to Mrs. Lambert." As for this lady,—thus Mrs. Forbes was wont to say—she was so closely veiled, none could tell whether her face bore the marks of age, or the look of youth.

Mrs. Forbes had a grateful nature, hence she never failed to end her tale with the recital of the royal compensation she received for taking care of the child. "A crisp Bank note, and a shining gold piece beside," she was wont to add. But though naturally loquacious, she was always silent about the moment of parting—never telling more than that sobs shook the gentle lady's slender form, as the tempest shakes the tall grass of a salt meadow. Even the memory made Mrs. Forbes' own tears fall like rain.

And the fisher-wives did not wonder, rugged daughters of toil and hardship though they were, for they all knew there had been a time when Mrs. Forbes had held in her arms a little child of her own. A child with eyes like Honoria's, blue as the sky. Doubtless it was this tender memory of mother-love, the ache of her heart to hold a baby close, that made Mrs. Forbes feel toward little Honoria something akin to the right of ownership, even though the voyage from Boston—where the baby had been entrusted to her care—could

be counted by days and nights numbering not more than the fingers on her strong right hand. These items, nothing more than suggestions, were all the Harbor-town folk knew of Honoria Lambert's first year of life. But they sufficed to make plain the fact, that she was the daughter of Squire and Mrs. Lambert's son, Ralph,—the young man who, in anger, had left his father's home on a spring morning, some five years before; one of those gusty, stormful days that herald the wild winds that sweep that Eastern shore about the time of the spring equinox. A day as unlike the clear sunshine, and cloudless sky that greeted Honoria's arrival, as the fair-faced child was unlike the young man—Ralph Lambert—her father.

What caused the difficulty between Squire Lambert and his son, no one definitely understood, not even the home-servants, or the gray-haired pastor of the parish church, who went among the people of his scattered flock with the freedom of a shepherd going in and out among his sheep-folds.

Ralph had always been much from home, first at school, then at college. He was city bred in manner, and a somewhat cold, distant youth, not one to win his way into the hearts of the free out-spoken Harbor-town men and women, who yet were not lacking in a dignified reserve. Indeed they still retained the old-time New England traits untouched by the inroad of new thoughts and ways, though, as Captain Forbes quaintly expressed it, "in the cities and large towns new notions were turning old ideas inside out, as fast as a well-worked mill, turned russets and pipins into cider, sparkling as champagne." If his hearers did not quite know what the sparkling champagne symbolized, they knew full well the significance of a rosy, round-cheeked apple turned into flowing liquid.

It was their custom, however, to take the good Captain's words, as words of wisdom—for did he not know the ways of the world?

Great importance also was added to Captain Forbes' knowledge and judgment, from the fact, that he was chosen by Squire Lambert to

be the bringer from Boston of the carefully protected roots, cuttings, and seedlings that had taken so kindly to the Harbor-town soil. In truth the Squire's garden had become a central place of interest, not only to the villagers, but to the country-side people for miles and miles inland. A place of interest, too, to many a weary sailor lad, or toil-worn fisherman who felt, even when outside the Harbor bar, the glow of nearing home as they caught sight of the high wall—made from stones brought from the forest quarries—that protected the garden's seaward side.

To one sailing up the Bay that wall looked verily like a coast fortification—and so it was in one sense, for when the wind was wild, and the waves running high, it guarded well the roses and lilies, and the hundred other tender blossoms that every spring-time unfolded in the garden borders, their own "floral calendar of the year." It was the blooming flowers, the early comers — crocuses, tulips, sturdy jonquils, golden daffodils, violets, and lily-bells that were all awake in May-time glad-

ness, that caused Honoria to clap her tiny hands with joy, when first she passed within the wide open garden gate, that by the way of the flower-bordered path, led up to the stately house.—A house that henceforth, during the years of childhood and girlhood, was to be her home, and hence *home*, in a certain way, all the days of her life. Do we ever, even though the years of our earthly lives count the allotted "three score and ten," lose from our hearts the Home of Childhood?

I think not.

IV.

BELIEVING in the life-lasting influence of early surroundings and training, it is almost necessary in the telling of Honoria's story to give at least an outline sketch of the special personalities of her grandparents, as well as a brief account of certain epochs in their youthful and middle-aged years which explain the somewhat unusual method of Honoria's education.

And yet it is no easy task to picture either Mrs. Lambert, or her husband, whom I can only think of as the 'Squire,' so firmly had that favorite New England title for a man of wealth and influence become clinched to his name. He was of a powerful frame, large-limbed, and tall, with a somewhat massive head, clear gray eyes, firm-set mouth, and a broad, intellectual brow.

This was the outer man, and spite much

that seemed contradictory, I think Squire Lambert's physique was a fair type of his soul, for there was nothing narrow about him. He was open-handed and open-hearted by nature, and if somewhat taciturn and reserved in manner, there were shadows in his by-gone history that explained it.

But to Honoria he was neither taciturn nor reserved. He was all tenderness to her; but then he loved the child. Loved her with all the intensity of a repressed soul, and in his thoughts he enfolded her too, in the poetry that was the heritage of his birth-land. If he had been a woman, rather than a self-controlled man, perchance this sentiment would have found utterance in words tender as a caress, for truly, though he never thus said, his heart recognized the child as "a flower on his cross."

This spirit of unspoken poetry pervaded the Squire's whole life, and found expression in his love for all God's bounty of growing things, and his garden was as dear to him as though the buds and blossoms knew the care

with which he tended them. Wherever he went his eyes were wide open to look for nature's beauty, and so, though I cannot call him a happy, contented man, yet, he was not wholly unhappy, for no one can be who seeks beauty and meaning in God's works. And this, Squire Lambert certainly did.

He and his wife were natives of the "land of yellow broom, and the blossoming heather" —and both were thoroughly Scotch in their loyal love of country, and yet, they had sought a new land, a new home! But of that, later on,—for just here is the place to describe Mrs. Lambert.

Her years had crossed life's meridian when the child Honoria came to her, a birdling from that tenderest of all nests—a mother's arms. Seeming, too, a message from the absent son, for whom Mrs. Lambert mourned with a sorrow not deeper—but bitterer,—ah! that was the sting of it—than the grief she felt for the loss from her earthly home, of the three little lads, whose graves were far away in Scotland; and as a reflection of her

sorrow, her countenance was marked by a look of pain, blended with peace.

Something of the same blending of grief, and yet gladness, sounded in her voice too, perhaps never more distinctly than it did the day when Honoria first reached out her baby hands, and sprang from the warm clasp of ruddy-faced Mrs. Forbes into the tender embrace of the grandmother's arms outstretched in welcome.

"My Ralph's bairn, my laddie's bairn,"—were the words Mrs. Lambert murmured, as she bowed her head over the golden curls of the smiling child. For like a child—the baby smiled, while the middle-aged woman wept. And yet, "just as a glimmer of sunshine brightness plays across the innocent showers of an April day," so that hour God touched for Mrs. Lambert "the tears of life with brightness."

For such a blessing the coming of the child proved. Still, I repeat, the note sweet as the echo of far-off music, sad as the echo of a sigh, never left her voice.

She always remained one of those women, we meet them among the rich and poor, learned and unlearned, who make us feel that their capacity for suffering has gone for years hand in hand with their capacity for joy—that they have somehow failed in finding the fulfilment of life's early promise—and belong to the sisterhood of whom the poet sings:

"There's always just something
Between me and light,
Some curtain of darkness,
Some Pine-covered height.

"There's ever a duty
Forbidding the rest,
That returns like the gleam
Of the Sun in the West."

Ah! if such women in their weariness,—whether it be of heart or body,—would only remember there "remaineth a Rest for the people of God,"—not here, but *There.*

Mrs. Lambert did remember this; she lived in the light of it too, spite the impress of the by-gone, which had set its seal on her face, long before the time of which I now tell. A

time, when whatever her early charm may have been, no one would have called her beautiful, with the beauty of youthful bloom and regular features. Nevertheless, it was a time when her dear smile had an attraction more abiding than beauty alone can possess. For, when middle-age has come, the blended look of struggle and yet submission is what makes a face interesting — revealing, as it does, the story of a soul, when the soul's life has been upward, climbing first, and then soaring!—and this was the record of Mrs. Lambert's soul.

And so no wonder she had caught a reflection of the 'angel-look' which like the 'New Name' was awaiting her in the blessed hereafter, where life's lessons pass into Heaven's progress—"from height to height."

Ah! think of Heaven's Mountain-tops, and their illumining! "In Thy Light, we shall see Light," that is the promise; its fulfilment, "Knowledge, in a fulness of *Brightness*, which in its completeness we can not know here; for this is a world of cloud and shadow;

but, thank God! the Heaven in which the cloud floats is larger than the cloud, and all full of light, and the true philosophy of life is to strive to get that light within ourselves" —even the Light of Christ's felt Presence. And we may get it in good measure, even though not in full completeness — for the "kingdom of God—it is not 'lo here'! or 'lo there'! it is within us, it is to be found with God's grace everywhere." When found —serenity of soul is its sign; and on Mrs. Lambert's countenance it reflected a look that seemed caught from hearkening to "a sweet perpetual hymn of quiet."

As a natural outcome of her life of aspiration, a certain severity of judgment that had belonged to her in youth, had melted as snow before sunshine. It was doubtless this gentle kindliness of manner, the index of her heart's good-will, that straightway disarmed little Honoria from any fear of the tall lady, clad in a robe of silvery gray, who stood that May morning on the wide porch of Squire Lambert's mansion, awaiting the coming of the

child. And from that first hour of their meeting there always continued between grandmother and child—youth and age, a love that vibrated in harmony with that "perfect love which casteth out fear," because its foundation was *trust.*

How I came to know all this and the details of Squire and Mrs. Lambert's early life the next chapter will tell. For I need a fresh page for the recountment of their story, which somehow stands apart in my memory like some isolated reef on that coast where reefs abounded—or like some star a space separated from Heaven's star-full constellations. An ocean rock-reef—and a lonely star! Two strange emblems to meet in the story of two lives—and yet—life—real life, is full of just such sharp contrasts.

V.

AND now for the life story, which in a certain way serves as a preface to the story of our Honoria.

I was a visitor at the Manor House. It was a summer morning — we were sitting, Bessie Ferguson—(Mrs. Lambert's sister)—and myself, on the wide porch that looked oceanward. Our hands were busy with needlework—our minds busy with thoughts, and my musings were linked with the present —Bessie Ferguson's with the past. Doubtless this was why she fell into telling me more than I had ever known of her sister's young days and the near afterward time.

What she told I pass on to you.

"My sister"—thus Bessie began—"filled a mid-way place in a family of daughters—called by the neighbors a daisy-chain—we counted seven in all. At the time of which I

tell, the elder sisters were a trio of recognized belles in the fastidious society of Edinburgh, where then, as now, intelligence and culture were more sought after than bright eyes and rosy cheeks, though for that matter, my sisters were not wanting in charm of feature and coloring.

"We younger ones were still under nursery rule, while Frances (that is Mrs. Lambert) was just beginning to enjoy a half-way emancipation from what had been all her life before the well-nigh undisputed sway of Aunt Anna, who had filled the place of home-mother for us, before, and after the time when our own young mother began to fade like a flower—and that was soon after the birth of her youngest born—myself—Bess.

"In fact Aunt Anna's right was as firmly established in our home as the roots of the fir-trees were interwoven with the soil of the garden plot that encircled our residence—a residence located in a side street leading out toward Calton Hill.

"Though, as I said, Frances was gliding

toward young ladyhood, she still liked best to be with 'the little sisters,' rather than the older ones, and spite her age we were like happy children together.

> 'Children for whom the sun
> Never came a wink too soon,
> Nor brought too long a day.'

"Our father—Prof. Ferguson—was a silent man; we all stood in awe of him, and yet it was not fear we felt so much as a loyal reverence. He had married early in life, a fair, gentle English bride, who loved him with the clinging devotion of a dependent child rather than the strong, helpful love of womanly companionship. And this child-wife affection had in it so much of timidity and self-distrust, I know from what Aunt Anna told me, my mother knew naught of the beautiful rest and harmony of souls that supplement one the other."

After a long pause, Bessie Ferguson had resumed her narrative, saying:

"It is that harmony which makes married

life to some men and women so blessed a thing that it seems always to echo like the chords of an Æolian harp with music-full notes, whether the winds blow east or west, north or south."

And then Bessie was still again for full five minutes. I remember the look in her eyes—as though I had seen it but yesterday; it was almost as significant as if her thought had found utterance. Yes, I knew she was pondering why her sister, Mrs. Lambert, like her mother, should have missed the knowledge of a happy wedded life. And yet when Bessie Ferguson resumed her story, her words gave no hint of her thought—for she said:

"How strange it is that sisters brought up in the same home, surrounded by the same influences, yet need as the years come and go to be taught by experiences as different as sunshine is from shadow."

I ventured to reply by the commonplace thought, that it was no stranger than the fact that some flowers needed shady nooks, others sunny borders. No stranger than the truth

flower-lovers tell, assuring us the blossoms of sweetest fragrance are wont to be those that bloom in shadowed places.

As I ceased speaking, Bessie reminded me of some skilful worker who ends one thread and begins another without leaving the mark of any break—for she continued her story with no heed to my words—but I leave it for a moment just to take up the thought of ending and beginning threads!

How full some lives are of them. I often wonder, thinking of it, if a deeper meaning than we are wont to read does not underlie the words that tell of our Saviour's "seamless robe." A garment all complete—yet we never read it was a costly fabric, royal purple in hue, and fringed with twisted linen. No—the Gospel record only tells the robe was seamless, as befitted the earthly garment worn by Him who lived the perfect life, in whose sacred holiness there were no breaks, no flaws—it was all one. Yes, surely there is a hidden truth for us to seek in the sentence which tells of a *Seamless Robe.*

I have made so wide a digression, I will bridge a page of details in Bessie Ferguson's anecdotical tale and resume it, at a date later by two years or more; and this brings us to the time when Allen Lambert had come a lad from his Highland home to make one of the throng of students who sought Prof. Ferguson's class-room.

"Allen was the son of an old and dear friend of our father's," Bessie said, "and he was straightway welcomed to our home with the warmth of clanship. I remember my father bade him come and go as though he were in truth a son or nephew of the house. During his first, and part of his second year at college, the young man—for the sake of consulting books in my father's private library —eagerly availed himself of this permission. But afterward! we sisters knew — even we young ones—it came to be Frances, not the wisdom of the books, Allen sought. When our father knew this he was pleased; he made no objection to Allen's suit, he smiled on it— and later he smiled on the wedding day, too.

"Aunt Anna also was pleased, more so than with the prospects of my other sisters.

"'Frances has a steady head for a girl but just out of her teens,' she was wont to say, 'and a steadfast heart, too; the love of her youth will be the love of her old age, for there are some women to whom first love means love forever.'—Those days were Frances' idyl days," Bessie continued, and she sighed,—she was a woman with a tender heart—as softly she added, "They say every woman has her idyl time."

Then she told how after a six months' engagement they were married, and straightway began housekeeping in Allen Lambert's Highland home. He was a young man of wealth, and also fell heir about that time,—through the death of an uncle,—to large estates in the Island of Jamaica. "I think the first years of married life were happy," said Bessie; "certainly if there were shadows, we at home did not know of them. Cares, of course, Frances had, for she was young to be the mistress of so large an establishment, and

the mother of three fine lads, too, before the years of her married life counted seven."

At this period of her tale Bessie put aside her work, and shaded her eyes with her uplifted hand, as though the reflected sunshine playing on the ocean waves, and garden flowers, were too bright a thing for the after-part of her tale.

"Now," she said, "we are coming, as all life pilgrims must, to a time of shadows.

"It was near the dawning of the eighth anniversary of Frances' wedding-day. For months there had been a great stirring in the minds of Scotland's scientific men, among whom Allen Lambert held a foremost place for a man comparatively young.

"The point in question was a dispute on an astronomical subject, and at last it was decided to settle the matter by the reading of essays, stating the claims on both sides. Six were to be the number of papers read, and among many applicants Allen Lambert was appointed to prepare one of the six.

"The subject was all-absorbing to him; day

and night he devoted to study, and Frances was hardly less absorbed. My father, too, was deeply interested; in fact, every member of the family was in a state of high expectancy.

"The judges chosen to decide on the merits of the essays were all men of letters, and well known in the scholarly world of Edinburgh. When the day and hour came for the reading of the articles all of us sisters were present, except Frances, the one who cared most. But the journey from her Highland home was too far for the baby boy—her fourth son, Ralph—a month old at that time. Strange, from the very first this boy was as unlike his sturdy brothers as a pale moonbeam is unlike unclouded sunshine.

"I never can forget that day," and Bessie's cheeks flushed just from the memory, as she continued: "I seem to see now the concourse of thinking, broad-browed men, assembled in the College Hall. I can hear, too, the applause that followed Allen's reading of his paper, and the decision in his favor.

"Yes, for that one day, among that band of

literary men, Allen Lambert was crowned king in the realm of thought."

After a brief silence Bessie spoke again, in a voice vibrating with deep emotion; for she told how, before nightfall of the next day, Allen's glory was dimmed by the most cruel of accusations,—asserting that the leading argument of his essay was a bold plagiarism.

"The accusation appeared in two of the most reliable journals, and straightway was taken up and repeated far and near.

"We who knew him best, all knew the story was false. We knew he was the soul of honor; but proof, strange as it seems, was well-nigh impossible to obtain,—for at that very time another scholar had formulated much the same theory."

But I will not linger over Bessie's detailed account of those days. Enough for us to know that Allen Lambert's nature, or rather his temperament, seemed suddenly transformed; even the courage which is wont to belong to an honorable man—and Allen was that—failed him.

He seemed all unable to endure suspicion with the quiet calm of a brave soul—waiting—and "knowing a good man's life is generally sufficient to defend itself, and sooner or later the lie rebounds on him who utters it."

Bitterest of all that time of bitter experience was the fact, that no word of tenderness, no repeated assurance of unquestioning love and confidence could convince Allen that Frances trusted him without a shadow of doubt.

Her pleadings were all in vain; he was like a blind man; every ray of light seemed turned to darkness, and the darkness did not lift. Their once happy home had become a changed place.

It was not the blighting of his brilliant literary prospects, Bessie explained, that had wounded him so cruelly; but that more than one among the scholarly men, who had known him from his college days on, yet believed the false story.

It was this, that gave the death-blow to Allen Lambert's youth. For *truth* had ever been a sacred master in his soul—even the

approach of falseness had been to him as the touch of some poisonous thing.

Why is it that people are inclined to believe evil rather than good? and why—even when the evil exists—are we so much sterner in our judgments, or condemnations rather, than the Gospel writers? I like these words of Max Müller on this thought. Do you remember?—he says:

"Nothing I admire more in the Gospels than the open way in which they sometimes speak of the failings of the Apostles. In their eyes nothing could have been more grievous than St. Peter's denial of Christ. Yet they made no secret of it, and without any public confession, recantation, or penance, Peter, after he has wept bitterly, is as great an Apostle as all the others, nay even greater. Surely these are passing clouds only, and what we ought to look to is the bright sky behind."

All this is a far wandering from Allen Lambert, and the story Bessie Ferguson told me, that summer morning, as we sat on the porch, that opened out toward the garden and the sea.

It was twilight when I listened to the sequel of her tale. A sequel briefly told—for all she said was:

"In my sister's home that year the old saying was verified, 'that troubles never come alone.'

"For it was but two months after the Edinburgh meeting when Duncan, the oldest of their lads, sickened with fever—and Duncan's last fluttering breath had hardly ceased, when Fergus and Walter were stricken by the same malady. And—within one short week—such a brief time to span a mother's parting from three brave lads—in the Highland Kirk-yard three graves were made—three silent little forms laid away 'in the hope of a joyful resurrection.'

"*That* was the only comfort—and it was a comfort to Frances. For firmly she believed they were children of the Covenant—those little lads—who by baptismal rite had been sealed members of God's dear flock—the pledge of it the sign of the cross."—

After hearing all this I needed no further explanation of why Mr. and Mrs. Lambert had

left their early home, and sought the new land of America. It explained, too, why Squire Lambert had turned from the haunts of men to a place secluded as Harbor-town. But it did not explain why the shadow dividing him and his wife from sympathy the one with the other had not lifted.

Neither did it explain his severity toward the child left—and his final estrangement from this son—but this last event, before my visit ended I did understand. And I will tell you of it, and then return to the record of this son's child—Honoria—whose life I call a Gospel.

Do you ask—why I use that term? In early Greek the "word Gospel meant the reward given to all who brought good tidings—and it became a kind of exclamation like our saying, 'Good-news'!"

And good-news was what Honoria brought all her life long to the hearts and homes of those who loved her. For God blessed her all the years of her life, and made her a blessing—hence a Gospel.

VI.

RALPH LAMBERT was always a delicate child—of a timid, fretful disposition, too—and as he grew older, what had seemed the weakness of babyhood developed into self-will and violent outbursts of temper when crossed; and Mrs. Lambert, in her desire to save her husband from trial, strove to shield the boy from his father's observation when these stormy times occurred.

Thus she encouraged, though unconsciously, the child's natural spirit of deception, and helped forward the very fault his father most feared—the power of skilful prevarication, which is always something closely akin to positive falsehood.

And yet Ralph's first outspoken untruth came to his mother, as well as to his father, like a sudden lightning flash out of a sky before unclouded. And then, it is pitiful to

tell, but in the matter of reproof, the mother blamed the father for harshness—the father blamed the mother for indulgence. It is just one of those old stories of parents paying the penalty of not sharing in open-hearted sympathy in the training of their children.

Ralph clung with the obstinacy of timidity to that first uttered falsehood, and from being a thing by itself, it became of well-nigh daily occurrence in some form of misrepresentation, if not of actual untruth.

No other fault in the boy could have so tried Squire Lambert, for the having a son lacking in a keen sense of honor and steadfast truthfulness—morbid as he continued to be about his own early trial—seemed to him almost like a voice declaring those who had doubted him, would feel assured they had been right—their proof—the fact that he, Allen Lambert, was the father of a child untruthful from babyhood.

As the fault increased, the friction between the Squire and Ralph increased; hence it seemed best that home-life should end early

for the lad, and when but twelve years of age he was sent to boarding-school, where he remained—except for the Holiday seasons—till school broadened into college.

From college, Ralph graduated with a fair standing, and now—thus his mother thought—all would be well. The faults of child and babyhood overcome, father and son would meet as man meeting man. Points of sympathy would daily open out between them, for Ralph loved study well enough not to find his father's pursuits irksome.

But the mother was disappointed. Again the father discovered an untruth, and again home-leaving followed the discovery. But this time Squire Lambert tried a new method. He would see what the reposing a grave trust in the youth would accomplish.

And so, though Ralph was but twenty-two years of age, the Squire made over into his care an estate on the Island of Jamaica, a coffee plantation of great value. In the autumn Ralph sailed away to assume the trust, and when spring-time came he returned to

give account of his stewardship. But, alas! the disappointment following that return was keener than any forerunning one.

Enough,—there was a stormful scene in the Squire's library one stormful spring night, and the next day Ralph Lambert left his father's home never to enter it again.

Such stories touch hearts too closely to tell them in detail.——

What the mother suffered only mothers can know.

The year of his marriage, when Squire Lambert had fallen heir to the Island property, he had made one of the two plantations left him over to his wife. And stern though he was toward Ralph, he did not refuse Mrs. Lambert's plea, that she should pass that richly yielding land on to her son.

This was how, spite his father's displeasure, Ralph Lambert became, while still young, a man of wealth.

Not long after becoming owner of the plantation, he married, and sad as it is to tell, his

young wife soon learned the sorrowful side of life; but joy came to her with the birth of the baby-girl—Honoria.

A joy which lasted till the child was ten months old; then a sudden illness prostrated the mother; she rallied, but with only strength enough for the voyage to Boston, where she gave her child—a treasure dearer than her own life—into the charge of kind Mrs. Forbes, with the injunction to take the baby-girl to Mrs. Lambert.

On the return voyage, the Angel of *Life*, through the gateway of mortal death, summoned the young mother—and with no more struggle than an infant falling asleep, her soul passed from the here to the blessed *There*—"There—where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

When the ship reached its mooring in Port Royal Bay, Ralph Lambert was among the first to step on deck.——And then they told him—then he found only his wife's silent form.——

And that very day, just after sunset, a new

grave was made in the fair Island of the sea, where the palms wave their branches, birds sing, and flowers bloom through the live-long days of the year.

After this, years came and went, but they brought no summons from Ralph Lambert recalling his motherless child. Letters, too, were but seldom received from him, though faithfully Mrs. Lambert sent mother-words of love to the son, who, spite his years and his wandering, her heart still called "my ain bairn."

Later—half a dozen years later—though in telling it now we run in advance of Honoria's story—Ralph Lambert married again—this time an English girl, daughter of an officer stationed on the Island. And still later—the voices of little children were heard in that home, where Honoria had smiled her first baby smile.

And now you know the outline story of the lives which fill the place of preface to Honoria's history. Lives—as unlike hers, as summer is unlike winter.

VII.

VERILY, leaving the by-gone pages and returning to the story of a happy childhood is like passing from shadow into sunlight.

And one of the traits we first linger to notice in the child Honoria, is perhaps one of the sweetest traits of childhood—for it is *trust* — that almost universal freedom from curiosity that is in any way akin to suspicion. So true this is that a suspicious child, thank God, is as rare as thunder in mid-winter.

It certainly was so with Honoria, for she accepted the conditions of her life, as unquestionably as she accepted the coming of day and night, or changing seasons.

She was always satisfied, too, even when she passed out of childhood, with her grandmother's replies to the few questions she

asked about the Island Home, where her father lived—and the Heaven, where her mother was so happy with the Holy Angels.

And yet from infancy her mind was eager with multiplying thoughts; she never tired asking "How; and why; and what for?"—that trio of interrogations that compose so large a part of a child's vocabulary.

She was only a child, too, when her soul met the more subtle questions: "What made her think? Why did she love? Why was it sometimes so hard to be good, sometimes so easy?" And underlying these queries, as the song of the sea underlies the surface waves, were undefined wonderings that at last grew into the questions—'Whence came her delight in harmony of sound? her joy in beauty of form and color?'

What was the secret of opening flower-buds, and ripening fruit? The meaning of sunshine one day, and storm the next?—of winter frost and summer heat?

These queries were wisely answered by her grandparents, who, though they had failed so

sadly in the training of the boy Ralph, succeeded rarely well in their guidance and government of the child Honoria.

As I said before, Harbor-town village was a remote hamlet, and the Squire and Mrs. Lambert's lives so secluded, Honoria had no companions near her own age; save an occasional visit from Pastor Warner's son and daughter — Mary and Ambrose — and they were both several years older; yet she was never lonely, for,

> "Solitude
> Is sweet society to her, who fills the air
> With gladness and involuntary song."

And this she did.

Then, too, she had not yet felt the blank of a loved presence gone out of her daily life, and *that* is what makes *aloneness* of soul. For, how can we miss what we never have had?

Perhaps the fact that Honoria came to her grandfather's home on a day of unclouded sunshine, and in the season of the year when flowers were wide-awake had something to do

with the Squire's associating her with sunlight and blossoms—and explained why he chose to teach her from Nature's outspread page, rather than from printed book of man's compiling.

And surely, this was well; for, remember, Inspiration sends us to the School of Nature—bidding us "consider the Ravens—for they are preachers of Him who feedeth them."

> "Lord, according to Thy words,
> I have considered Thy birds:
> And I find their life good,
> And better the better understood.
>
> It cometh, therefore, to this, Lord!
> I have considered Thy word,
> And henceforth will be Thy Bird."

"Go to the ant—consider her ways and be wise"—this is another of Nature's lessons for us—and still another we find in the command—"consider the lilies"—"for they have a silent eloquence more rich than words."

This is true of all blossoms—"so true we are told it by a poet only half enlightened."

"All flowers"—thus he sings—

"Are the alphabet of angels, whereby
They write in hills and fields mysterious truths."

"And the complete philosopher adds, that they are the alphabet not of angels, but of *God*."

"Converse with Nature, then nor shrub, nor tree,
Nor flower that to the sun its hues unfold,
But breathes a text for some pure homily."

"Yes, yes,—all have a voice, the heavens above,
The earth beneath, and things that under earth
Lie deeply hidden,—all send out a sound,
And lecture man, the wandering and the lost,
In holy lore."

To return to Honoria. If the child's thoughts were by her grandfather's teaching, guided in some measure by the wisdom culled from the Sacred Book—it was far more so in her intercourse with her grandmother.

For, well-nigh half Mrs. Lambert's replies to the child's questions were framed in Bible words. Hence, when she asked of the sea and its wonders, the answer told of "Him who hath measured the water in the hollow of His Hand"; "Who hath compassed the sea with bounds." When she asked, "Why the light

of day, the darkness of night?" what better answer could be given than the words telling of "the Lord who causeth the Light, and causeth it not to shine—the Lord whose mercy is in the Heavens, and His faithfulness over-reacheth unto the clouds"?

This is a sample of Mrs. Lambert's teaching. It was her way, too, to bid the child seek the best in everything and every one.

"Always remember," thus she taught, "there is *good in all.*" And if tares did grow among the wheat in human heart-gardens, Honoria's task was "still to seek the wheat."

The child's soul responded to these lessons, just as it did to words often repeated by her grandmother; in fact, long before she grasped their full meaning, memory traced the maxim on her mind's tablet: "Noble thoughts make noble acts; a soul occupied with great ideas is best prepared for the smallest duties."——

Truly a good maxim—opening out, too, toward the oft-quoted, yet never too well-known saying: "The divinest views of life penetrate into its meanest emergencies."

VIII.

SQUIRE LAMBERT was endowed with quick perceptions, and he soon discovered that while Honoria's mind, like the air, was stirred by every breeze of thought, she was swayed, too, by rapidly changing moods.

In teaching her, he paid reference to this, striving to interblend the grave and sombre with the light and joyous.

Even in educating the child in the lore of the floral world, he caused to be planted in the same beds, flowers that were associated, some with bright, some with serious significance.

Thus from almost infancy, as Honoria had walked the garden paths, hand in hand with her grandfather, she had learned not only about the flowers, but of their linkings, sometimes with a bit of history, sometimes with a

poet's song—an old-time legend or wise man's fable.

Do you ask where Squire Lambert found history lessons? Why, the gay tulips were full of them—dating from the royal reign when first they were brought from Germany to England. Fuller still were the tufted blossoms of sweet-scented mignonette. Squire Lambert never gathered a sprig of it without calling Honoria his "Mignonette"—his "little darling"—his flower of "good cheer."——

After these playful terms of endearment, he was wont to tell of Napoleon's disastrous campaign in Egypt, and of the weary, foot-worn soldiers—rough, battle-marred men—and yet so tender-hearted that, when they inhaled the familiar fragrance of the home flower blossoming in a foreign land, they exclaimed in voices tearful with emotion: "Little darling"—"Flower of good cheer."

To Honoria, with her active fancy, this story was like a picture; and so firm a hold it took in her memory that, whenever she saw mignonette, all her life long, she always felt a

thrill of longing in her soul that she might in very truth be, like the simple bloom, a bringer of good cheer to soldiers in the weary battle-field of life.

As for the so-called 'common flowers,'— "snow-drops and crocuses; polyanthus in red, trimmed with yellow; homely, dusty miller, and sweet-alyssum, the little, cheerful floweret which the bee first finds — sweet-williams, star-like jonquils, and their golden-hued sister, daffodils," they were all dear as friends to Honoria. And so were the yellow king-cups, huge crimson peonies, canterbury bells, sweet-peas, and iris, goddess of the rainbow.

Yet, spite her fondness for all these, she loved the lowly growth best—the plants that were named for the virtues, and that in her thoughts were linked as types of St. Paul's "fruits of the Spirit."

Honesty, with its fearless purple blossom—Humility, the creeping plant that upsprings from the poorest soil, knowing no more of beauty than its insignificant unfolding of tiny white and yellow buds—Violets, the blue-eyed

field flowers, whispering content; and lilies, ringing bells of pure thoughts, chalices of sweet odor.

As for the Hyacinth, it filled a place apart in Honoria's mind like some holy thing; and she always nestled close to her grandfather and stole her little hand into his warm, strong clasp when she asked for the story of the Egyptian princess entombed for hundreds of years, and yet, found at last holding fast in her dead hand the hyacinth root—the root—ah! the wonder of it, that when planted in mother earth sent forth green leaves and a blossom!

Honoria, long before she could have told why, was glad the time for hyacinths to bloom came in the spring—nature's resurrection season. Glad her grandfather called them, emblems of Immortality, even though the word had a meaning as undefined to her young mind as the sound of the sea waves was undefined in her heart's scale of music-full tones.

No. Not till she knew what is meant by the saying, "we die to live," could she know

the meaning of a resurrection-flower. Nevertheless, while waiting for this knowledge, she kept fresh in memory the hyacinth story; and through it, I think, she caught an echo sounding from here to There—for—Heaven was never far off to Honoria Lambert.

If these thoughts seemed sombre for a child, Honoria had merry enough associations with other flowers—especially with the larkspurs, purple and white, and full of meaning as the caroling bird in whose honor they were named. And the Squire never failed to teach bird as well as flower lessons when the larkspurs were in bloom.—Lessons that, when Honoria was a tiny girl, almost always ended in her being sent to search for pheasant-eyes, the star-flowers, so like the bird's eye.

All this belonged to spring, summer, and early autumn; but when winter came, it, too, brought a flower teaching; for then, amid the snow and frost, the Christmas rose bloomed, and that rose is the crowning-flower parable of the year.

But whatever the season, or its lesson, Hon-

oria was happy, from early spring, when she strove to cover with her little foot "nine violets all at once," that according to the Scotch legend she might have a right to sing: "Summer is coming, coming."—Happy, on to the time when, like feathers from angel wings, snowflakes danced through the air from early morning on to nightfall. For truly "the door in every heart which opens inward to God" was never closed those days in Honoria's soul.

Thus she lost none of the inheritance of either childhood or youth, for her thoughts were all sweet, pure, and childlike, using the word in the full meaning that is radiant with the light of the child-likeness our Saviour taught, even the happy freedom of the kingdom of Heaven.

The kingdom of Heaven! How true it is that kingdom is within each one of us—within you and within me! Only we need to keep wide open the God-ward door of our souls if we are to walk in its blessed liberty.

"I walk at liberty *because* I keep Thy law." Ah! think of that Door, through which come

to us *in*ward, *out*ward, and *up*ward looks—"Three in One, One in Three." And Christ said: "I am the Door"; "by Me, if any man enter in, he shall go in and out, and find pasture." "I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains."

Remember, only keep your soul's door open, and

"Thou shalt summer high in bliss
Upon the Hills of God."

IX.

AS winter sometimes vanishes before spring, with no mid-way day of lessening cold, so, with no more lingering over Honoria's early life, I will speed on to the time when she crossed the threshold leading from childhood to maidenhood.

For—her sixteenth birth-day had come! Life lay before her—a thing of promise. She was happy, light-hearted, and care-free. She knew no anxiety for the morrow—to-day held its own glad secret.

Her soul was full of the sweet, unwritten music of youth. She believed in goodness. "The wine of life, the sense of progress" thrilled through her heart as wind stirs among tree-tops.

Looking at her was like reading a poem of the soul, for her mortal face was bright

with the expression of the immortal. Hearing her speak was like listening to music, her voice was so soft and low and full of harmony. While her laugh held the melody of a tuneful bell, it was so clear, so glad. And yet spite all the joyfulness, Honoria's temperament had not altered, she still reminded one of a changing April day. For while one hour she was eager and enthusiastic as a wild bird soaring upward in the sunlight, the next she was gentle as a white dove that folds its wings, content to linger amid corn-fields, and low-lying meadows. While she was sensitive to the first hint of disapproval as a rose is to the first touch of frost, she yet possessed steadiness of thought and purpose.

This combination of unlike traits added greatly to her winsomeness. It was as though in her soul poetry and prose were linked, but in all details connected with practical commonplace duties, prose ever held poetry in subjection.

When she was still hardly more than a child, her grandparents often wondered how

she could be so pliant, and yet so forcible in all that touched her sense of right and wrong; so decisive and yet so gentle; so thoughtful for others, so ready to excuse their failings, and yet so stern in judging herself. Her mind, too, seemed formed to rule, if when she encountered life's discipline her heart learned the true secret of submission.

Squire and Mrs. Lambert both realized how much depended on that brief word *if*— for they knew without that knowledge no one ever yet really ruled in the broad sense that recognizes mere power; compelling obedience, is not the ruling of an uplifting influence, any more than the forcing others to use time is the helping them to the deeper meaning of redeeming it.

For remember, in the phrase the command is, "*redeem time*, not merely use it, but transform it into eternity by living aright."

X.

"SIXTEEN years old!" Thus Squire Lambert said that August day, as he looked at the slight figure that was guiding with steady hand and well-trained eye, a white-winged boat amid the reefs and bolder rocks that out-jutted from the shore, northward of Harbor-town.

"Sixteen years old!" twice he repeated the words—the second time adding: "And she has no more knowledge of the ways of the world, than a bird that has never flown a rod from the home-nest."

As he ceased speaking, the Squire turned from the window toward Mrs. Lambert, who met his gaze with an eager questioning look, for full well she knew her husband's words portended some change for Honoria.

After half an hour's discussion it was all settled, and even before the young girl turned

her light craft homeward, her grandfather had written and deposited in the mail-pouch, a letter addressed to the President of the then somewhat famous "Summit Hill Seminary." An institute in which Mary Warner had held a place as teacher for a year or more.

And so what had been at noontime a mere seed-thought in the Squire's mind, by nightfall had sprung up into an open flower. Such a brief time to encompass a decision which meant so much to Honoria.—But then it is wont to be so in life. Time is no measure of the magnitude of events and deeds. And—it is our recognition of this that makes plain for us how in God's sight, "a thousand years are but as one day." It makes plain, too, how the separation from our dear ones gone to the Heavenly Home—these days and hours that seem so long to us who wait—to them are as nothing—for *There* they count no time.

It was twilight when Honoria's boat anchored in the sheltered cove below the gar-

den wall. She had a venturesome afternoon, having accomplished a sail quite around the great Rock, the sailors called the "Stormy Petrel," because its outline as seen from the entrance of the Harbor had a strong likeness to the form of a huge bird.

Her only companion was old Joe, the fisherman, whose work-days were over, and whose chief delight consisted now in piloting the young girl in and out among the rocks and reefs, coves and bays of the coast, or when the day was clear, on some wider flight beyond the Harbor, out to the open sea.

Stars were beginning to twinkle in the blue sky when Honoria bade Joe good-night. Her voice was so clear, her grandmother sitting on the porch distinctly heard the words—and then they mellowed off into the low refrain of a sea-song.

As Honoria entered the garden, fire-flies were dancing from bush to bush. Stars of the air she used to call them when a child, and always they seemed to her friendly sparks of light flashing out radiance.

She lingered to gather a handful of evening primroses—flowers her grandfather loved.

> "Evening Primroses
> O'er which the wind may hover till it dozes—
> O'er which it well might take a pleasant sleep,
> But that it is ever startled by the leap
> Of buds into ripe flowers."

Honoria knew the lines, but she did not think of them then—only afterward she remembered, and they seemed so a type of the near change in her own life, the leap from home seclusion to school companionship, she always felt a tenderness for the mute little flowers they pictured—associating them with half an hour later when her grandfather told her his plan.

She accepted it with a smile. She trusted him fully. He said "She was to go—it was for her good." And trust does not question. And, though the home leaving would be hard, there was no bitterness in the thought.

Hence Honoria's experience was like that which God's dear children know when they accept trials cheerfully—be they little or

great—for the trustful soul is bounded by the blessed assurance, "God knows—and He loves."

Understand me, I do not say pain is gone when we submit and accept trouble, because in God's wisdom we need it—but I say bitterness is gone.

It is strange how much faith it takes to attain the serenity of childlike trust. Truly so much, "only the power of God can enable us to support the will of God."

For long that night Honoria lay wide awake. From her bed she could look through the eastern window out toward the sea—and up skyward—and almost all the time her gaze was up.

For while she knew but little of the science of the distant orbs, her heart could read the hieroglyphic of star and cloud, and was it not—thus she thought—by skyward looks the Lord led His children of old when He called them to walk in a new path?—"The Lord, who went in the way before them in a pillar of fire by night, and a pillar of cloud by day."

And Honoria found comfort in the thought, though full well she knew the time of visible manifestation had ceased long ago, except in the mystic way, by which stars shine to let glory through.

When at last Honoria closed her eyes, the clock in the church tower, down in the Hamlet, was just ringing out a sharp note, that told one day had sped into another. Something in the sound which came—a sequel to her thoughts as she had looked at the stars—made her repeat half aloud the prayer of the Breton mariner: "Keep me, my God, my boat is so small, and Thy ocean is so wide."——The same spiritual influence, a minute later, caused her to softly whisper the chant of the sailor on Southern waters: "Midnight is past—midnight is past, the cross begins to bend."

It was years before Honoria touched the full depth of meaning in the words— and yet from that hour, they never failed when she was troubled to shine like a beacon-light illumining her onward way.

This is not strange, for surely they are key-note words to the light of "Thy will be done."

"Midnight is past—the cross begins to bend!"——

Remember, "it is to the cross that the heart must turn for that which reconciles it to all conflicts." And conflict, according to the Gospel record, deals with what we call "little things, as well as with the great."

"Whoso is wise, will ponder these things, and he shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord."

XI.

THE weeks closely following Squire Lambert's decision regarding Honoria's future were so full of new thoughts and experiences, she playfully said they well might have spanned a year of life, rather than only one brief month of the twelve.

There was so much to be done; certain studies she wanted, with her grandfather for guide, to go over once again. The winter outfit, too, to prepare; and the hundred other nameless things that press forward, claiming attention when one plans leaving home.

Then Mrs. Lambert, with the quick intuition of a loving heart, felt, before Honoria entered on the unknown life of a large boarding-school, it was important, as far as possible, to bring her into familiar friendliness with companions near her own age.

And so the grandmother planned now one

pleasure and then another, and all of them included Mary Warner and her brother Ambrose; he was home that season for his last vacation before launching on the full tide of independent manhood, which he was to do that very autumn. A solemn charge awaited him, for after ordination he was to be immediately installed as Pastor over a church in the northern part of Maine.

Ambrose was twenty-six years old, and to Honoria, who had but just stepped across the threshold of sixteen, he seemed a middle-aged man. And she had in a certain way known him all her life long; thus there was no charm of novelty in their intercourse—except its frequency.

Certainly for her, those days held no hint of romance; she saw nothing ideal in the tall, broad-shouldered, athletic youth, who was as strong of limb and muscle as the bough of a sturdy oak. Ambrose Warner was quick of motion, too, and eager in speech; thought chased thought in his mind as swiftly as wave follows wave when the tide is in-coming.

This quickness, combined with earnestness and free expression of opinion, made the young man interesting to Squire Lambert, whose affections were so centered in Honoria, the mere fact that Ambrose mentally met her with responsive sympathy, made him a doubly welcome member of the pleasure parties.

In truth, Ambrose did understand her, better even than her grandfather did; but to Mary Warner, Honoria was always a problem. She not only thought her unconventional, but sometimes little more than a mere poetic dreamer.

This Ambrose never thought, for he recognized the something deeper than fancy in Honoria's utterances; he had a clearness of insight that enabled him to see beyond her playful words, the glow of a vital spirit of true earnestness; and this gave him power to guide her thoughts on—and upward.

September dawned and ended that year, a month of rare days, when the air was just crisp enough with breezy freshness to supply a tonic rich with the aroma of strength and stimulant for physical exertion.

Squire Lambert felt the exhilaration in every fibre of his being. He had always been like a barometer in his sensitiveness to the changes of weather, and those days of glad sunshine his whole nature seemed for the time to expand with something of his early light-heartedness.

He had, too, a somewhat unusual ability in measuring the compass of another's mind, and this gave a zest to his enjoyment of Ambrose's society; for he realized, spite the crudeness of youth, and half-developed deduction of thought, yet—"not what others think for us, but what we are able to think for ourselves is the true life of our life." And think for himself Ambrose Warner undoubtedly did.

And so the older man held in favor the younger's original out-look of mind, a mind in which there was naught stereotyped any more than there was in Honoria's thoughts and expresssions.

I will only tell the story of one of those pleasure-full days—for that one will serve as an index to them all—though it was on this

special day that Honoria hearkened to a conversation that took so deep a root in her heart, it influenced her all the after-years of her life.

It was a day they spent from early morning till near nightfall among the hills—and so far their flight reached, it led inland for a stretch of full fifteen miles as the crows fly.

Sunrise was the starting hour. The party numbered only four—Squire Lambert and Honoria, Ambrose and Mary Warner.

The Squire held the reins, and skilfully guided the fleet-footed roadsters, that he had trained from frisky colts, and that, sober horses though they had become, had yet lost none of their fleetness, but sped along the shore-road like winged steeds; for the way did not turn inland and up-hill till just beyond "Five-Mile Point"—then it led away from the salt-marsh meadows, over which, at that hour, there rested a white light fog, while the willows, alders, and tall grass that skirted the meadows rustled in the morning breeze.

Over the far-off hills, too, a dim vapor

hung, through which they were only tremulously visible.

But it is not of nature I want to tell, and yet nature helped unfold the thought-truths that dawned that day for Honoria. It is wont to be thus, for when we "read nature," we find "nature is the friend of Truth."—And Truth is the Word—"and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

"Thy Word is Truth.

"Science with humble reverence repeats, 'Thy Word is Truth.'

"History takes up the refrain, and re-echoes back the sentiment, 'Thy Word is Truth.'

"Thy Word is Truth. And may all mankind from pole to pole, with one voice also exclaim, 'Thy Word is Truth.'"

XII.

I SAID I would tell in detail Honoria's experience that autumn day—and yet, it hardly needs detailing, for its history is but a duplicate of that which comes to all earnest natures. A deepening of the sense of the profoundly earnest thing life is. An hour, after which the soul is felt as it never has been before. How strange this is, even though so commonplace—and how as years come and go, laden though they be with heart-stirring events, memory yet turns to these dawning hours of the soul's birth.

It is but a yesterday by-gone, when I listened to a company of friends discussing this very subject.

One, a grave man, who had struggled with the problem of life—the mystery of permitted wrong, permitted suffering—told how his years counted twelve before he came to the hour,

after which he recognized self-hood — the *apart*ness of every human soul.

This is his story:

It was a mid-summer day; he was lying on the grass, resting in the shade of a shadowy elm-tree, and looking up meanwhile through the lace-like intwining of leaf and twig into the infinite depth of blue sky—when, like the tenderness of a smile, the love of a caress, across the blue expanse a soft, white, vapory cloudlet floated — and, so mysterious are God's dealings—a before unknown feeling of awe filled the spirit of the boy.

The depth of blue, the floating cloud, seemed in a moment traced with a sacred meaning, it was like an open in-look into the Unseen.

An hour later, driving the cows home from pasture,—for he was a farmer's lad—when he passed again by the brook path, across the same meadow, beneath the same tree, he knew he had a soul—life had dawned for him.

As this tale ended, a lady caught up the

idea, and recounted her remembrance of standing when a child in the solemn stillness of the hush that pervades the Poets' Corner in England's Westminster, when suddenly the silence was broken by a soft note from the old Abbey organ; a strain of music that seemed to her an echo of some Heavenly chime, and interblended with the harmony came an illumining of her mind which kindled the light of her soul.

Afterward others of the company recalled experiences, but they nearly all were but different versions of the Sun-loving Clytie's legend—or of the fairy Undine; one day the soulless—the next the soul-full maiden of the sea.—And these latter records were empty of the deep heart of earnestness that made the first recitals akin to our Honoria's experience.

Thinking of this mystery — the unseen spiritual working of mind and soul,—I sometimes wonder,—as there is a two-fold, rather a hundred-fold fulness of meaning linked with every parable truth of our Saviour's Gospel message—may not the grain of mustard-seed include with its well-known significance a

thought, too, of this spiritual quickening, which like the morning dew on opening flower-buds, falls from Heaven on young hearts when their waking-time comes?

According to the soil of the heart-garden the seed would grow. Good soil yielding spiritual strength, expanding into a living soul — full, as all living souls must be, of sweet charities, and earnest aspirations, till verily the "birds of the air" find resting-places on the far out-reaching branches—for—what are the "birds of the air" in Bible metaphor but human hearts?

But all this has naught to do with Honoria Lambert, that day, when she ranked, according to the poet,

"The fairest flower in the garden of creation—a young, opening mind."

And now remember my story dates before Tennyson had penned his tale of the Holy Grail—and the knights of Arthur's Court—before Lowell had sung of Sir Launfal, or George Macdonald of Sir Galahad, hence there were no words from their poems in which

Squire Lambert and Ambrose Warner could frame their talk of the search for the Grail.

It was a theme to stir the Squire; from youth he had loved research, and during the lonely years spent in the secluded Harbor-town home, many and many were the legends and myths he had traced to their starting-place in the far-away ages—and none among them had filled his mind with interest like those of the San Grail—for none "so turned from the outer life into the inner, and raised the latter to its highest level"—none so "ennobled with a sacred radiance the work-day world."

That Ambrose was strongly moved by the Squire's words was not strange, for though my story belongs to a time so far off, even then the pulse of the present had begun to beat in men's minds. And to the young man, knowing, as he did, something of the world of letters, the "Arthur myths were as something real, something significant—a part of his own time and thought."

More so, because he had in his nature no small measure of "that chivalry which made

him none the worse a man, rather the better and the nobler."

Yes, it was natural enough that Ambrose should be thus interested; but why did the heart of Honoria flutter as never before? Why did she feel like a caged bird who would fain soar away from the home-nest of familiar thought into purer, clearer air?

For an answer listen to the Squire's words—and I know no better way of passing them on than by quoting, as he did, from one who wrote of those early myths: "Perhaps we may discover that they taught in Parables—that their harps were tuned to give forth chords of which the keynote was appreciated but by the few, or which perhaps is only now sounding in the ears of a later generation."

Be this as it may, "Surely in the Grail legends there may be traced deep lessons of high thought and theological teaching, and a spiritual element that gives, as it were, two lives to the Poems—even as the outer and inner life of man make up the perfect being."

It was this double fullness that Honoria

caught, like an undertone sounding in her grandfather's words, and that thrilled her soul, and like a song held a place there ever after—which is not to be wondered at—for, "What is the search for the Holy Grail but a sort of mediæval Pilgrim's Progress?"——

It was the outline of Wolfram von Eschenbach's poem of 'Parzival' Squire Lambert told his young listeners—beginning with the opening lines:

"Is doubt a neighbor to the heart?
That to the soul must be a smart,
Disgrace and honor bide
As equals, side by side,
In the strong man and bold
Like magpies hue twofold.
Yet may he joyful be,
When unto both sides free
To heaven and to hell.
But when he's false and fell,
Then black 's his hue in verity.
And now to darkness standeth he:
So he who steadfast is, and right,
Holds only to the color white.
This flying parable, I wis,
Too fast for silly people is:
The earnest come the meaning nigh,
Since it before their minds will fly
Even as flies a frightened hare."

Honoria and Ambrose both recognized a something earnest and lofty in sentiment in the lines, and that something was the thought in the poet's mind that goes far beyond its external form.——

And this they felt as the Squire continued to outline sketch after sketch, portraying the search for this "San Grail, supposed by many to be the cup from which the Lord Christ drank at the last supper with the disciples."

The story of Parzival, of which he had repeated the prelude, led into Wales—and then to Norway—where Parzival's father dies, leaving his solitary queen the one child, whom she brings up as a peasant boy.

As boyhood passes into youth, the lad feels the longing of young manhood for adventure and intercourse with the gay and valiant knights of whom he hears. At last his mother lets him go forth, but first she arrays him in a fool's cap and bells. Adventure follows adventure, till Parzival finds himself at Arthur's Court, when an old knight detects his kingly birth, and teaches him courtly manners, and

then sends him forth in search of renown, giving but one caution—and that, not to ask many questions. At last Parzival, tiring of adventure, returns to visit his mother, and on his way comes to a Castle by a Lake, wherein are assembled the King and four hundred knights —all gathered around a table, where they are fed by the miraculous power of the Holy Grail, which the Queen places upon the table.

The King has been severely wounded—his knights are sorrowing; but Parzival asks no questions—only on leaving, he hears too late, that he has been in the Castle of the Grail, and should have asked the King the cause of his wound.

Soon after this Arthur, hearing of Parzival's exploits, makes him a member of the "Round Table"—then follow the adventures of Parzival in search of the Grail, during which he performs many deeds of bravery, struggle, and self-denial.

At last, it is announced to him at Arthur's table, that he has been chosen King of the Grail—whereupon he goes to the Castle by

the Lake—his first deed there the healing of the wounded King.

This is but a brief summary of the old legend ; but tell me, is it not a parable?

To Honoria it was—and a revelation, too, of "a pure, noble, aspiring soul, to whom the Grail was the symbol of a loftier life." Not that she grasped this all at once. No; it needed years, laden with the lessons life teaches, before she fully understood the "spiritual meaning shining through the lines of the old Poem."—A Poem with which she became as familiar as though it had been written in her own native language. When at last she did touch its full meaning, she found "that peace of soul comes only through faith and obedience."

Playfully, that day, as they rode through the forest, her grandfather said he would give her a maxim from the old song with which to encircle her home-leaving. The lines he gave were :

"Shun untravelled road :
Leave dark ways untrod ;
If they are sure and fair,
Enter and journey there."

And then, with more of tenderness than he was wont to let sound in his voice, the Squire softly added lines Honoria knew full well he meant for her too:

> "The Grail—it was all-glorious, fair,
> Beyond perfection earth can lend."

And:

> "She who bore it must be pure—
> Of just and perfect heart, and strong,
> To frighten falsehood, sin, and wrong."

Now you know the spirit of that morning talk which so influenced Honoria. And out of it grew that which followed later on; but between times, there were silent places and merry chats,—and a long lingering for lunch, which Mary Warner and Honoria spread under the shadow of a huge pine that had carpeted the low, stunted grass at its base with soft pine needles, rich in resinous odor.

It was a bountiful lunch, and they were a hungry group, who did full justice to the dainties Mrs. Lambert had prepared.

After lunching, came an hour or more of

rest, not only for themselves, but for the tired horses, too, which Ambrose unloosened from restraining strap and harness, fastening them by the long reins to a tree, where they were within reach of a grassy plot, green and fresh as a June meadow.

Meanwhile, Honoria brought rug and cushion from the carriage and made a pillow for her grandfather, who had already lighted his cigar and was reclining on a mossy ledge of rock.

As for Mary Warner, she was busy with thread and needle—her work a delicate bit of embroidery, that was to brighten the somewhat sombre frock her mother was "making over" for the third time.

Honoria's rest was quite different; it did not seek bodily repose, for it was found in action, and the delight of beholding the beauty outspread before her, whichever way she turned; and so she wandered from one spot to another, while all the time her mind was full of thought, her heart full of feeling, and

"Thought is deeper than all speech;
Feeling deeper than all thought."

Ambrose watched Honoria's graceful figure as she flitted to and fro, one moment in shadow, the next in sunshine. And—as he watched, suddenly there dawned upon him that which made life seem a gladder thing than ever he had dreamed before. And yet, never once, during that or the autumn days which followed, did he by look or word give a hint of what that hill-top excursion had revealed to his own heart.

Not even when he and Honoria went in search of the forest-hid lakes,—the goal of their trip—the Squire finding himself too tired for the rough scramble over rock and brooklet, through brush-wood and tangled vines — and Mary calling herself quite too busy to waste more time in pleasure-seeking.

But was it wasting time? As unconsciously as a bird sings, Honoria asked question after question as she and Ambrose climbed the steep up-hill path. From a child she had been wont, when excited by pleasure, to be eager

after the "why"—and it was natural for her to ask, "Tell me, what is the secret by which Nature's beauty has the power to make one so happy?"

Equally natural was it for Ambrose to answer from the level of his studies during the last session at the Seminary.

And so he took up Honoria's question, and carried it back to the time when the Hebrew poet saw "in the beauty of holiness" a close analogy to the beauty of the visible world.

A feeling shared by the Greeks, Ambrose explained, for while "they made beauty a chief object of life, they regarded the beautiful as so near a symbol of the good, it became identified with it, till the two words were hardly distinguished."

Eagerly Honoria listened, as he continued to tell her, how "in modern language we describe natural beauty by terms derived from our vocabulary of moral excellence."

And—how true this is—think but for a moment of the twofold use to which we apply the simple terms—"lovely, noble, pure, tender, glorious, happy, grave, solemn."

"What does all this indicate," asked Ambrose, in a voice that thrilled with interest, "but that 'we are justified in reflecting back upon the Author of Nature, the One of all perfection, the ideas which we derive from the contemplation of what is admirable in Nature, only transferring them from a physical to a moral sense.'"

And with an impetuosity like the rush of a mountain torrent, the young man added, "'Once admit that natural beauty is symbolical of God, and it will read a lesson at every turn on the tenderness, the harmony, the nobility, and the glory of the Infinite King.'"

As Ambrose ceased speaking, a sudden turn in the rough path brought them to the border of the first of the mountain lakes. An expanse of water, blue and calm as the azure depth above—a fitting mirror for Ambrose's words.

And they each saw reflected in that "still water" the thoughts their own hearts held—for always we find in large measure that which we bring with us. Hence it is "that the world

is shadowed or brightened by our own hearts, rather than by anything of itself. Our joy makes the cloudiest day glad, and our grief finds night in the sunniest day."

And that day had held for Ambrose Warner and for Honoria Lambert too, a crisis time in the history of their souls,—a time which had opened out for them broad acres, as it were, of before unknown aspirations and expectations. For, verily, they had both heard echoes from the Beyond, and caught, in more than a poetical sense, glimpses of "a New Heaven and a New Earth."

XIII.

THE shadows of the pines were lengthening as they started on their homeward way. When they reached the valley, and turned for one last look at the hills, the dim vapor that had hung over them like a veil in the early morning, had gathered again. But now, illumined by the westering sun, it shone a golden mist that wrapped hill-tops and deep gorges, rocky clefts and forest trees all in one mysterious glow, that melted into shadowy lights.

The bank-sides, edging the road, were profusely rich in flowers, while a rippling stream, below the bank, went singing on its way seaward.

In truth, everything, and everywhere seemed instinct with beauty, and alive with thought—even the very leaves seemed to Honoria, to nod good-night as the gentle breeze played among the tree-boughs.

But the special glory of the hour was the revelation of colors that rested on the farm lands that lay spread out at the base of the hills,—a billowy succession of corn-fields, bathed in the exquisite tints of sunset that fell across them in a shimmer of golden sheen —bringing out in sharp contrast the deep green of some lowly growing, and yet none the less nourish-full harvests.

As a sequel to all this inland glory, came the turn at "Five-Mile Point," after which their way led farther and farther from the hills and forests, the meadows and the ripened harvest, away toward the sea, and the glimmer of lights already beginning to shine in the windows of Harbor-town homes.

Going home! Why is it always like a metaphor of life?—We never come to the turning place, that we do not find the last half shorter than the first! We go down hill so much quicker than we go up!

The village clock was striking eight, when Mary and Ambrose Warner opened the garden gate, and stood on the well-worn steps

of the parsonage threshold, watching the carriage speed down the quiet street—and catching the echo of Honoria's clear-toned voice, as she called a twice-repeated "Good-night and happy dreams."——

And so the day had come to its close.—The day—when just between the rising and the setting of the sun, Honoria Lambert glided out of childhood into—Life.——

"Life!——

"A burst of golden sunshine,
A whispering of the leaves,
A music-ripple on the brook,
A joy, a wonder in each nook:
A sweeping shadow o'er the land,
A flashing of the tree-tops,
A crimsoning of the lake,
A peaceful mildness in the air,
A thought of hidden mysteries there,
A glorious fading of the sun—
A summer day is done.

"A joy in childhood's playthings,
A casting them aside!
A flash of golden youthhood's hour
When joy breaks through the passing shower:
A castle building in the air:
A cherished hope departed!

A smile, a joy, a doubt,
A gleam reflected from the past:
A sigh upon its bosom cast:
A mystery of a world unknown;
And then——a soul has flown."

PART II.

"Seeking, ever seeking,
Like the children, I have won
A guerdon all undreamt of
When first my quest begun.
And my thoughts come back like wanderers,
Out-wearied, to my breast;
What they sought for long they found not,
Yet was the Unsought best.
For I sought not out for crosses,
I did not seek for pain;
Yet I find the heart's sore losses
Were the spirit's surest gain."

I.

WE have come to a time in Honoria Lambert's history, when it seems best that my recital should occasionally give place to her own record of life's unfolding.

And yet, there are no carefully-kept diary pages to offer you, for her record is fragmentary; in many a place you will need to seek the meaning between the lines—and like all stories of life, you must sometimes "read and read" if you would touch its heart.

Extracts from letters I think give the fullest in-looks into her soul—and the truest glimpse of how the motives that ruled her inner-life shone in the outward with a Gospel light.

The first from which I copy bears the date of a day as closely following her departure from home as to-morrow follows yesterday. And it is all aglow with the gladness of her young life, when every chord over which her

heart played gave out a musicful strain. Which was well—for youth is the time for music and sunshine. And yet, when storms come in youth, as they do now and then, as they did later on to Honoria—these first storm-clouds, even though they be transient, seem for the time darker than clouds ever do again.

Is it because the soul has not yet voyaged far enough on the wide ocean of existence for it to see above the clouds? Is it only the toil-worn mariners—who know of tempest and wreck—who know, too, up and beyond the storms and clouds that enfold the coast-line of earth, the blue is unclouded, peaceful, and calm, just as the deep sea below the dashing surface-waves is still? Or is the secret of this knowledge bounded by the soul's sailing out of the harbor, but toward the *Haven?* ——

Knowledge—remember, it does not include Sight. What a difference there is between the two—"We *know* in whom we believe," but for sight we wait. Ah, yes——

"We wait as we must;
Thank God that our eyes are so dim!
'Twould rob this poor life of some sweetness of trust
To look in the future with Him,
We'd rather be blind with His word for repose,—
'Thy strength as thy day shall unfold'—
Than see the great seals of His knowledge unclose,
And the scroll of our future unrolled."

II.

"BEE-HIVE SEMINARY, *October 2d.*"

THUS reads the heading of Honoria's first letter after her arrival at Summit Hill Academy——and it begins—

My Own Dear Grandparents :—Here I am, safe and well—only yesterday with you—to-day so far away!—My waking thought was the query: Will it always be thus in life? that time, counted by hours and minutes, will span but a brief space, while counted by miles, that bridge distance dividing loving hearts; oh, it seems so vast a thing.

But—I do not like that word divide, for nothing can do that. This fact makes so large a part of the gladness of loving—the real *you* and *me*, why, dear grandpapa and grandmamma, we are close together still—only, I want sight and touch, for I did so miss the good-night and good-morning

kiss that have always been my "daily blessing."—Thinking of these dear greetings as blessings, I seem to know now, that they have been in a certain way what my heart has meant, when I have asked for "daily bread."—*Love*. it has so nourished and fed me all my life long.

And I know love encompasses your Honoria still, for prayer is not bounded by earthly near or farness—and it can enfold me here as truly as if I were with you. And yet,—oh! I have met so many *yets*, even the little way I have journeyed in life.

Tell me, dear grandmamma, if I live long, and become good and patient like you—if I find the San Grail, grandpapa will know what I mean—will I be satisfied to leave the puzzling *yets* and *whys*? Will I be content with spiritual sight? Now, I do want everything to be visible and tangible.

But I suppose, in the Bible, where it is promised "the pure in heart shall see," it only refers to the spirit—for purity is something that so belongs to the spiritual, just as

fragrance belongs to flowers—a subtle essence like beauty, that we can not grasp or frame in words. All else—except their odor—is so touchable and seeable about flowers. Their delicate grace of form, and wonder of color, it is all easy to understand—or at least plain in a certain way. But fragrance—why, we can no more catch and hold it up to gaze on, than we can catch the breath of June roses, that comes floating in through open doors and windows, like some sweet song without words.

But this is not the sort of letter you will want; and I have but ten minutes left for writing before the time will come for me to go to the first of the dreaded examinations, that must be passed before I can be enrolled as a true member of Summit Hill Seminary!—

Ten minutes! in which to tell of an all-day's journey—and such a day! A dream of beauty, every hour of it.

I am glad it was the very first day of Nature's royal-robed month, October, that

grandpapa chose for my first home-leaving, glad my destination was to this town, where is located the far-famed "Bee-Hive," for thus they call this rambling red-brick building.

You will smile, and think I am glad about everything; and so I am—even that rain fell the night before we started. For, at sunrise, when Mary Warner and I left the skiff at "Five-Mile Point," and took the coach for our inland journey, every growing thing was sparkling, as though the rain-drops were jewels that had been scattered with a lavish hand. And so they were,

> "For, not one drop
> Falls from the clouds upon the bare hill-top,
> Falls through dark hours
> Upon the closed chalice of the flowers,
> Or on the sea,
> Or on the murmurous, thickly-foliaged trees,
> But falls to cherish
> What else would pine, and drooping, sadly perish."

I wonder will grandmamma remember this song of the rain. She taught it to me when I was only a little girl. But it was not in my

mind that night as I listened to the rhythmic music of the patter, patter, against my window-pane. No, I was then, wide awake with the new thoughts that had come to me, during that excursion when we went to the hills, and Ambrose Warner and I found their heart—the lakes.

Legend and myth that grandpapa had told, kept trooping through my mind, just as birds come flying northward with the first hint of spring, or like cloudlets that gather and play across the horizon an hour before sunrise.

My soul—I think it is only just beginning to look over the horizon; for thoughts, hopes, and plans for the future, they are all undefined and shadowy like the before-sunrise cloudlets. And — somehow, I feel, since through hearing the legend of the Holy Grail, I have been brought to this dawning of morning in my soul, so it will illumine light for the mid-day of life. I wonder—will it kindle a twilight glow too?——

"At evening-time it shall be light." Is this a special promise for those who find the holy thing? And—will I find it?——

But, there goes the clanging bell of the Academy, and I must away to the dreaded ordeal.——

Mary Warner looked grave as an owl when I told her how I feared this public examination, and she said, "All will be well, if you do not fly off on one of your quests after the *Why*." And, laughingly, she added, "For once be content to let three times seven count twenty-one, without seeking the mystical significance of the sacred number."

I wish Mary understood me. How can I help being like myself? God made people unlike one the other, just as He made flowers of different color, form, and fragrance. And if my poor little mind has an "interrogation point just before it," Mary's may be controlled by thoughts marked by a comma—while our next neighbor's may abound in "exclamations" or "full periods." And why should this difference in minds make any more confusion than the different points make on a printed page, where the very difference is needed to bring out the meaning?

Mary would say to this—"True enough, but there are many, many more commas and semi-colons, too, than interrogations—and the many stand for the commonplace people to whom it is wise to seek to belong." And I know she would add in her practical way—"The fact that the commas and semi-colons are in so much more frequent use is proof positive that they accomplish the most."——

Well, I suppose she is right—and yet, her brother Ambrose finds a question in almost every thought, for his mind is as full of interrogations as an ear of corn is full of golden kernels.

But the bell is tolling, and without delay I must obey its summons—so this time I will truly away—away.——

Later.—The examination is over! And—I blundered all the way through. I am so unused to strange faces, it all bewildered me.

The Hall was full—the teachers sitting together on a slightly raised platform—while we scholars were ranked before them according to

age first, and then according to our scholarship.

I will not write the details, for Prof. Stuart said he would send a full report to grandpapa.

And now a dear good-night, and bless me and love me—and oh! I do not like this educational process; so please let it end soon, and call me home to learn again of the trees and the flowers, the sea and the sky—call me home.

III.

PROF. STUART'S letter, with its report of what Honoria called her "blunders," caused Squire Lambert to smile more than once.

And yet, as he handed it to Mrs. Lambert, he only said, "The Professor seems to understand the child." A comment, that even in its brevity meant much to the loving grandmother, for she well knew that Honoria's was not an easy nature to grasp.

"She was like a harp"—thus Mrs. Lambert was wont to describe her—"She gave forth music in response to every touch, so sweet, healthful, pure, and true was the young girl's soul; and yet, as is the way with all profoundly earnest souls, there was a side to her that only a few would ever know.

For there are so few in this world who can interpret "without words" another's soul—

and there is so much in all of us that needs this tender spiritual interpretation.

Sometimes I wonder, does the power to thus discover "the rhythm of the soul" solve the mystery of why love seems to our limited sight so strange in its out-going? Soul seeks soul — and when this blessed in-sight is granted, then the outer form becomes no more than the frame which encircles some treasured picture. And we no more think of calling the frame the picture, than we think of calling the body the soul. Nevertheless, we are glad of a well-chosen frame that helps to reveal the picture's charm, just as we are glad when outward beauty helps reveal the soul we call our dearest.

It was something of this subtle soul personality that Prof. Stuart immediately discerned in Honoria Lambert—while the lady principal of the Academy—Mrs. Manning—saw only a somewhat timid girl, untrained in systematic thought; a girl far too eager in her quest for the root of knowledge to appreciate and rest satisfied with thoughts formulated

and made plain by text-book and manual—and hence a maiden who, according to Mrs. Manning's idea, would not prove a comfortable pupil, able to recite page after page without misplacing a word.

But, from the very first hour of their meeting, to Prof. Stuart, Honoria was the scholar of scholars among the fifty new-comers of that opening term.

Did his heart even then divine that she would become the maiden of maidens, too?

Prof. Stuart was a middle-aged man—this seemed hardly likely. But then, life is full of unlikely events—and this is a life-story.

IV.

EXTRACTS FROM HONORIA'S JOURNAL.

I AM trying to spin a mental analysis—its subject, the company of school-girls, among whom I am now numbered.

For an illustrating type, my fancy lights on the flowers and ferns that edge the roadway that leads from the village up to the Academy building.

I am sure, that autumn day when the school year opened, every blossom and growth seemed like a parable. Certain it is, there are among us golden-rod and purple-aster girls, with here and there a blue gentian or some venturesome hair-bell or graceful fern-like maiden. There are bitter-sweets, too, and ivies with clinging tendrils—and to make my metaphor complete, lowly-growing grass-blades by the score.——

Yes—surely this suggested resemblance hints the inner likeness. But why the difference? A question even Prof. Stuart can not answer. For—

> "What mortal knows,
> Whence comes the tint and odor of the rose?
> What probing deep
> Has ever solved the mystery?"

Why is it that some are "born lilies and toll their perfume on the passing air"? While of some!—But here I am face to face again with the very question I asked Ambrose Warner the day he bade me good-bye. The old question—Why do tares grow among the corn? Why is there deadly night-shade and thorny thistle in heart-gardens as well as in Nature's fields? And Ambrose—he never made a word of answer to my question.

Well, spite this unexplainable difference between us maidens—a difference for which I am glad, as I wrote grandmamma, when I called some of us commas, and some by the other punctuation titles,—in one thing we are all alike. We are all here as seekers.

Only some of us want knowledge which blooms through sunshine rather than by sunshine and rain-drops, too.

Am I one of the sunshine lovers? my heart whispers, yes.

And this is wrong, for trained as I have been, I know storms are needed as well as sunshine, before a blossom can become fruit.

I suppose the thought that is in my heart now, was in grandmamma's, when she bade me remember, "through storms and sunshine, through heat and cold, the life pilgrim must continue his way, till his weary feet reach Heaven."

It seems strange why this twofold preparation is needed. Why the sorrows of life *here* on earth, help educate for the joys of life *There*, in Heaven.

Ah! the mystery of it all. "Every soul a seed," that is what Prof. Stuart said this morning, at the close of his lecture on Botany, ending with the words, "it doth not yet appear what it shall be."

As we left the class-room, I ventured to lin-

ger to ask, "Did he mean us to find a moral or a blessing in that last thought, or did it hold both?" He looked at me so keenly, and yet kindly, as he replied:

"Yesterday I read, 'We are as yet only the ugly root of a future beautiful plant; the best man or woman is only a shoot, a little way out of the ground; but we are God's plants—God's flowers.'" After a moment, he added, "If you believe this, then the moral of seed-time is a blessing."

"God's plants—God's flowers!" I repeated the words softly to myself,—and it is true, just the assurance they give of God's ownership of us, *is* a blessing.

But—am I His plant, His flower?

I was thinking thus as I turned away from Prof. Stuart. I thought I was alone as I passed out of the open door; but in a moment I became conscious some one was close by my side, keeping step, as it were, with me. Straightway, I knew it was Rachel Fleming, and since that hour, we have seemed to walk, heart to heart, and yet

we have met every day of the six months that have gone by, since I first came to Summit Hill; but never before have we crossed the bridge that divides acquaintance from friendship. For we agree to henceforth call one another friend.

It seems a solemn compact to me, more so, I suppose, because I have been till now so secluded from companions of my own age.

I never felt at all the same toward any one as I do toward Rachel, except perhaps Ambrose Warner—and he is so unlike Rachel, I can hardly call my feeling toward him the same.

A friend—it is a wonderful possession—and yet, it half frightens me—for in friendship, as in all other things, the old proverb holds good, "Nothing venture, nothing have." There is the beautiful side, too—and somehow I think most of that—and I am glad it comes to me in old Jeremy Taylor's quaint definition: "By friendship I suppose you mean the greatest love, and the greatest usefulness, and the most open communication, and the noblest

sufferings, and the most exemplary faithfulness, and the most earnest truth, and the heartiest counsel, and the greatest union of minds of which brave men and women are capable."

In writing her grandmother of Rachel Fleming, Honoria had described her as a tall, slender girl, with dark eyes that had a far-away look in them, as though she saw beyond the limitations of this present life.

"I am in a class," thus the after-part of the letter reads, "of thirty or more girls, and we all look kindly at one another, but Rachel is the only one toward whom my heart outreaches. I am so glad now we are acknowledged friends, and that I can speak with her of the dearest things. I long to ask—has she too heard of the San Grail — and is she seeking the pearl of great price—and does it typify to her what it does to me?

"Somehow, I think she would seek far, while I think it is near—close even as my own soul—for it is written, 'the Kingdom of Heaven is within you.'

"If you see Ambrose Warner, ask him, dear grandmamma, if that Bible-verse is the key to open the lock of this hidden treasure.

"It was Ambrose who told me of the old-time scholar—celebrated for knowledge—who could read the meaning of the stars, and whose theory was that a troop of angels left on earth a something so sacred, whoever was called to its service became truly blessed, and this something so precious was the Holy Grail —and Ambrose said it was a parable, but the mystic story so makes me long to find the service in life which is haloed by a blessing."

There may be those who will think Honoria's linking of this Grail legend, with her aspirations for a holy life, a paltry blending of the material with the spiritual, the fanciful with the real. But I do not think so, for surely we have Old and New Testament authority and guidance for the linking of the visible with the invisible, metaphor with reality.

Take but one example out of the many—"And he said, Hagar, Sarah's maid, whence

comest thou, and whither wilt thou go?" (Gen. xvi. 8). "Which things contain an allegory" (Gal. iv. 24), or as the old version reads, "they *are* an allegory."——

Think of the wilderness, where Hagar tarried by the fountain—and then of the wilderness we know:—think, too, of the angel and the fountain. Yes, surely we have a right to seek and find helpful allegories wherever we can, either in Bible pages, nature's teachings, or through legend and even myth—only we must be careful to keep an open eye to see God in all.

Just here I will copy another extract from Honoria's journal,—for she continues in it the thought with which she closed her letter to her grandmother:

"I do so long to be a blessing in the world, and the San Grail legends have become so interwoven with my longing, they supply in a certain way a motive power, though they do not take my thoughts from the Great Example, for they reveal sacred interpretations that make life and service such a holy,

sacred thing. But they make my heart shiver sometimes as I ponder them, for they so demand struggle as necessary to win victory, suffering to develop strength, and I do not want to suffer. Life, it is now all so beautiful and glad to me.

"No, I do not want to drink from the chalice, that holds the grapes of God—and yet, without suffering, how can I learn the secret of giving sympathy and consolation, and without that giving how can my life be a blessing? Still I am afraid of pain—afraid of mental and heart pain even more than physical.

"Why, even now, young as I am, I fear the struggle with the powers of darkness, and I dread encountering many a life problem, because I am afraid of the struggle with discussions, which if I launch out on the wide sea of thought, I know will toss my frail bark roughly, as sea-weeds are tossed, when the wind blows landward, and the tide drifts inward.

"To-night the Bible verse, 'I have trodden

the wine-press alone,' comes to me so freighted with meaning. It so portrays the profound loneliness of the Christ. And must we, too, know something of this solitariness of soul before we can 'comfort others, with the comfort wherewith we are comforted of God'? Or does the truth that He trod the wine-press take the loneliness away; and only leave the assurance, that if we are called to drink the cup of sorrow, it will be a cup of blessing as well as grief, for His Hand fills it?

"All this I can think, but fear is in my heart still. I want some clear, strong mind to make plain that which I seem to understand with my intellect, but which I do not grasp with my heart.

"I feel as though I were walking an open road with two turnings, which point to the two chief elements in faith—faith in what the Saviour *did*, and faith in what the Saviour *was*. What I want, is to have it made plain, how I can take the *did* and *was*, and make them one in my soul's experience,

for then this soul of mine that is so empty now, would become full of that faith which is an all-absorbing desire for Christ-likeness.

"As yet, I hardly touch in any vital way the hem of faith's garment, for if I did, surely I would not fear faith's guiding, even though it might lead out of sunshine into shadow, out of joy into sorrow."

V.

HONORIA'S application of the old proverb,—"Nothing venture, nothing have,"—was more necessary than she knew when first her love for Rachel Fleming became friendship.

For the motives which ruled their lives, were as unlike as the never-resting waves of the sea are unlike the calm ripples that stir a mountain lake.

Hence it was better that Honoria should recognize that it was possible that a friendship might require "to be chiefly carried on, on one side, without due correspondence on the other." As Emerson expresses it, "Why should we cumber ourselves with regrets that the receiver is not capacious? It never troubles the sun that some of his rays fall wide and vain into ungrateful space, and only a small part on the reflecting planet. Yet,

this can hardly be said without a sort of treachery to the relation."—We so feel the crown of friendship is harmony and sympathy of thought, equality of mental power, and oneness of spiritual desire.

In Honoria's diary she notes a suggestion of the difference between her own and Rachel's views.

"Rachel tries to persuade me her desire to excel comes from ambition, the longing to be first, rather than from real love of knowledge; but indeed I think it is half humility that makes her thus miscall her motive."

These few lines tell, how in all places, where Rachel disappointed her, Honoria was wont to find an excuse, because she interpreted her friend by her own standard.

It is a tender ordering that this should be so in youth, and sometimes I think this loving way of interpreting others is part of the abiding youngness of heart that belongs to those whose "youth is renewed like the eagle's, those who mount up on wings." Remember, "without wings we can never soar

upward to the climate of love," — and "Faith and humility are the wings of the soul."——

To return to Honoria, and her early knowledge of Rachel. It was but natural she should behold the good—for it is written—"to the pure all things are pure,"—that is, to the true in soul, and Honoria was true, and single and earnest in motive, as the purest lily that ever opened under summer sky.—I like the words which tell that "the pure heart is the transparent firmament of blue, up through which we get into God's great daylight."

It was in that daylight our Honoria walked —and meanwhile out of the depth of her tender soul she gave Rachel treasure-thoughts and aspirations, for there was nothing selfish about her, she gave of her very best.—And school-life was a rarely earnest thing to Honoria. When it closed she knew she was to straightway enter on a life that would demand a mind well prepared by study and thought to meet men and women who had been knowledge-seekers long before her blue eyes had

looked "on the Heaven above or the earth beneath." For her grandfather had told Honoria the quiet home-life at Harbor-town was not to be resumed for many a year after she left school.

He had met her in Boston during the brief spring-time vacation, and as they wandered together from one place of interest to another, the Squire had disclosed his plans for her future. Immediately after graduation a year was to follow, spent in Scotland with the aunts and cousins—then a tour on the Continent to last another year—and then she was to seek the Island home and the father who had parted from her when she was a mere baby girl.

As Honoria had listened to her grandfather's programme, she clung close to his arm, and she looked more like a frightened bird than the brave-hearted maiden she was in truth.

But fears—and a separation from those she loved best, that dated full eighteen months beyond the present, soon faded before youth's

happy *now*—while the knowledge of her grandfather's plans remained as a stimulant for effort.

The thought, too, of meeting her father, meant much to Honoria, and the fact that her grandfather said the influence of that father's home would test her every principle, only served to thrill her heart with the glow of anticipated conflict.

"Grandfather says I will have much to try me," thus she wrote in her journal; "but I do not fear—for how can one be a conqueror in spiritual life, unless there be trials, and even strife with temptation? And all my life long I have been so shielded from conflict, and yet I know it is true 'the more peril in the battle, the more joy in triumph.' I know, 'when storms toss the sailor and threaten shipwreck, when sky and sea are calmed, there is exceeding joy, because there has been exceeding danger. Everywhere the greatest joy is ushered in by the greatest pain.' No; I do not know this yet—but the heroes in Faith tell me it is so.

"Storm and then calm. It is so a type of earth and Heaven. Death and life. Struggle, then victory. From the valley to the mountain-top. Illustrations one hears every day, yet they never can lose their power because they are so *real*.

"Yes, surely they are all types of from 'Height to Height.'—No wonder the old hymn prefaces this thought by the lines:

> "'By the thorn-road, and no other,
> Is the Mount of Vision won!'"

This was how Honoria mused as she sat in the sunshine and wrote in the little diary book, which was like a picture of her young heart.

Poor child! She little thought how different it is to ponder the 'thorn-road,' than it is to walk it; how different the asking for a thorn-crown, than the wearing it! And yet it was well she thought of these things, before the trials came, as come they must—for "Christ does not promise when they come that thorns shall be converted into roses."

VI.

SPRING, spite the fact that it is wont to come slowly among the New England hills, sometimes unfolds all suddenly. It was so the season when Honoria met her grandfather in Boston.

Her absence from the Academy bridged only from one Saturday to the next. And yet, in that week, snow-drifts had melted, grass-blades pushed out their tender green, and blue-birds sang their first spring-time notes.

It was the gladdest season of all the year to begin a friendship. And no wonder, to Honoria and Rachel it seemed a pledge of permanency for their newly recognized love for one another—for it held promise, not only for the "life that now is, but for that which shall be."

Ah! if all the year long, our hearts could

but *feel* the sureness of immortality as we do feel it in the spring—then, we would not need to speak of one day as Easter, for all days as from darkness they spring into light would repeat—the Easter gladness—'Christ is Risen.' 'Life follows death.' Our Risen Christ, the Open Door. Our Hope can enter within the Veil.

"When spring flowers rise from their little graves,
In the beauty of vernal bloom,
Then think of the first great Easter morn,
Remember the riven tomb!

"When conscience tells of many a sin
And speaks of a Master denied,
When the soul cries out for a Saviour from guilt,
Remember the riven tomb!"

Honoria did not go far in her heart to heart companionship with Rachel before she spoke of the things she held most dear; and it was in these matters the first shadow of difference made itself felt between them.

In all religious thoughts their training had been entirely unlike. Rachel Fleming, ac-

cording to opinions that then held sway in many parts of New England, was perhaps more orthodox than Honoria. She was strict in her observance of the letter of the law, but she had never been taught, as Honoria had,—through her grandmother's gentle guidance—to decipher the hieroglyphic letter of the Old Testament by the illumining of the New, which reads—"Law is Love, Love is Law,"—"Christ is God, for God is Christ,"—"I and my Father are one; he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father. Have I been so long a time with you, and yet hast thou not known me?" Were ever words of deeper pathos!—"so long"—"not yet known!"

But to return to the difference between the two friends in their thoughts of the Christ. Rachel beheld in Him merely an object of worship—Honoria an object for imitation as well as worship, and hence for close study. They were talking of this one day in the late spring, as they walked up and down the long path that led from the Academy to the Chapel. Prof. Stuart joined them. And

Honoria, in writing her grandmother the history of that hour, after reporting the forepart of their conversation, added:

"Rachel asked Prof. Stuart, 'How we could comprehend the Lord? How imperfection could understand perfection?' For answer he repeated Christ's own words, 'I am the Light of Life,'—and then he said, 'Remember, this Light can touch the sympathies of each, and so create motive for reproduction—its sphere limitless, for it is within the circuit of *each* life—and in its working it is natural.' Naturalness! Prof. Stuart makes so much of it.

"I told him one day that he made me feel I ought to reverence my own special personality, full of faults as it is. And he replied—'Certainly, you ought to; for man was made in the image of God.' But I was telling you what he said to Rachel about the Lord's dealing with us in the different spheres of our being. 'In the sphere of the mind through mystery; in the sphere of the affections through either profoundest joy, or deep-

est grief; in the sphere of the body through physical pain; in the sphere of the will through conflict; in conscience either through remorse, or the blessed experience, only known by true Christians, for they alone can know the peace and gladness of soul of which St. Paul writes: "Our rejoicing is the testimony of our conscience."' Words, Prof. Stuart said, 'that had the charm of life in them, for they tell how a man lived—how a man may live.'"

This is how Honoria wrote her grandmother of that conversation—a conversation that in her memory was like Aaron's rod—a blossoming staff, every thought fragrant as a flower. But to Rachel, Prof. Stuart's words were hardly more than an empty sound, for she felt no glow of love to God; the striving after obedience to His commands was a mere outgrowth of education, not a loving, willing service like that Honoria sought to yield. Hence much the Professor said could not fail to be meaningless, for if we do not understand an earthly friend till we love, how can we un-

derstand the Heavenly Friend before we love Him?

And yet love—Heavenly Love—was so manifest that day even in mute things. It seemed strange one could be out under the blue sky and not feel its enfolding influence. For it was one of those days, bright with sunshine and rare beauty, when everything whispers of the "Land not far off."

The fruit-bearing trees that grew in the orchard back of the Academy, were like blooming globes of beauty, while flowers were nodding and smiling everywhere, in the garden, and in the woods, out in the meadows and on the hill-sides. It was that day that Honoria found the first lily-bell of the season—and so subtle is the mind in its working, somehow that lily led her thoughts across sea and continent, from the present to the past, back to the very heart of her favorite symbol, the Holy Grail. But she paused before giving utterance to her thoughts, feeling the restraint of Prof. Stuart's presence. And yet, when with a smile, he said, "Let me hear too," with a

grace unstudied as the song of a bird, Honoria repeated legend after legend.

And as she spoke they stood still, there—

"Where the blossoms from the grass were springing,
As they laughed to meet the sparkling sun";—

there, out under the blue sky—

"While the small birds on the bough were singing."

But what Honoria repeated, I will tell in the next chapter.

VII.

NO—I will not tell all she repeated, but merely the lines over which she lingered tenderly, because they held a two-fold meaning for her—they were from the old poem of Parzival—and she began where—

"Advanced the Queen
With countenance of so bright a sheen,
They all imagined day would dawn.
On a green silken cushion she
The Pearl of Pardon did bear.
.
Complete, root, branch, beginning, end—
The Grail it was all-glorious, fair,
Beyond perfection earth can lend."

And then, in a softer voice, Honoria added the words that ever since first she heard them, she had felt her grandfather meant her to take for a life rule :

"She who bore it must be pure,
Of just and perfect heart, and strong
To frighten falsehood, sin, and wrong."

And with eyes shining like stars Honoria exclaimed: "I know it holds a deeper spiritual significance than ever yet I have touched."

Rachel interrupted, asking, "But why are you not content to let it fill the place of a type of whatever prize you set before you rather than seeking its deep meaning?"

"Yes," Honoria replied, "if it stands as the emblem of the really *best*—the 'Pearl of great price.'"—And she murmured the words again: "On a green silken cushion she, the Pearl of Pardon did bear." And then a look of earnest thought stole over Honoria's face. It was a full minute before she spoke again. When she did, it was as though she were speaking to herself, for she said, "I am wondering if there is not a deep significance in the recorded statement that it was a woman who carried the 'Pearl of Pardon'—for after Christ came women filled such a different place in life." And then, for she was apt to be quick in passing on from one thought to another, Honoria resumed her description of "the stone which some called the Grail, and which

was said to have the power of reviving life so that it became more beautiful than ever."

"Do you not see," she asked, "the shining of the Pearl in this legend? To me, it is like the other side of the Gospel parable of 'the merchantman seeking goodly pearls'"—and, without waiting for a reply, she continued to tell that "they who keep the holy thing before them should always be fresh and lovely, for it is food for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, the source of all good."

One more legend Honoria told, and that the one which, to my mind, is the fullest of all the Grail stories. It is the one linked with the Dove. Do you remember, it tells of Good Friday, and of the Dove's descending from Heaven on that day to reveal the Holy Grail.

"A Dove its flight from Heaven doth wing,
And bears to earth an offering,
Upon the holy stone to lay
A small white wafer. Then away
With pinions spread, and shining crest,
It seeks again its heavenly nest."

"The Dove, the emblem of the Holy Spirit, descending to testify, as it were, to the divine power of the Grail."

The day following their talk of the Holy Grail, Honoria met Prof. Stuart in the Hall of the Academy, and as he lingered to speak with her, eagerly she asked, "Is it wrong for me to find all I do in this 'San Grail'?"

"Surely not wrong," the Professor replied, "if, in the beauty of the thought, and the enjoyment of research, you do not lose sight of the deed it inspires. If, in following the legend and its unfolding meanings, you do not forget its practical lesson."

"Yes, I know," softly Honoria answered, "it is called a cup of pearl, and the cup is the symbol of service. I know the Christ said, 'Whosoever shall give a cup of cold water in My Name, blessed is he.'—I know the Lord asked, 'Can you drink of the cup of which I drink?' I know He took the cup and blessed it."

But did she know?

Perhaps it was well that just then the

Chapel bell rang the summons for evening prayers,—a dear old-time custom still in force in that New England Seminary. In a moment the Hall was full of teachers and scholars, and five minutes later Honoria was sitting by Rachel Fleming, and listening to Dr. Manning's well-known voice, as he read the 'Call to Prayer'; every one before him had heard it many a time before, and yet they never could hear it too often.

Do you know the verses I mean?

"When dark the road, and sore the foot,
And desolate the way,
We have a light, a strength, a guide
Oremus—'Let us Pray.'

"Prayer is the culture of the soul
That turns to wheat the tares,
Prayer is a begging angel, whom
We shelter unawares.

"Prayer is a wisdom, which the wise
To babes have oft resigned;
But He, who bade us seek, be sure
He meant that we should find.

"A small hand feeling in the dark,
A natural gasp for air,
A half articulate aim at speech—
To want to pray, is prayer.

"What, though the language halts? The halt
Have also walked with God,
They lean upon His arm and find
A Staff even in His Rod.

"The song of Moses is the song
That long through Heaven has rung,
And yet the prayer of Moses came
From one of stammering tongue.

"'Unasked He gives,' dost thou object?
Yet ask Him not the less,
For even a blessing, blessing needs
To make it blessedness.

"'Unasked He gives,' 'tis very true
His bounty is so great:
Yet no man ever got from God
But he had more to get.

"'But what if we should ask amiss
As one who knew has taught?'
There's no man asks so much amiss
As *he* who asks for naught.

"He gives or He withholds in Love,
In this one truth we rest:
God does the best, 'tis only man
That does it for the best.

"'What will be, will be,' yea, but that
Is not a theme for thee:
The one important point is this—
What willest thou to be?——

"Wilt thou be made? was never asked
Of any living soul:
The only question put to man
Is, wilt thou be made whole?——

"'But how is it so great a boon
Through simple prayer we meet?'
We know not *how*, we only know
That *this* is His receipt.

"Sufficient that He tells us so,
Whose words we can not doubt:
Sufficient, surely, that we see
It somehow brought about.

"'He knows thy wants, without thine aid
He sees the thing thou art'—
He does, and knows our greatest want
Is an obeying heart.

"He could have made the marriage wine
At Cana with a word:
The water that the guests brought in
Was nothing to the Lord.

"But what He needs not, He requires,
And should the guests decline,
He leaves them with their emptiness
And makes no water wine.

"Then when He bids thee fill the pots,
Go fill them to the brim,
Not fearing lest ye ask too much
Exhaust or weary Him."——

VIII.

IT is so pleasant to linger over the story of early maidenhood; I do not want to open the window of this ark-time safety, and let the Dove fly out over the broad waters. For who knows, will it find an olive leaf? Nevertheless windows must open—Doves must fly. They must try their wings, for how else can they learn to soar?

The Dove of old—Noah's own cherished Dove—"did not find the olive-branch in the Ark, but out in a ruined world!" And because souls need this testing of independent flight there comes an end to school discipline, and home training, too, in a certain way, even though we never pass the boundary of the "school of life" till we enter that

> "Golden chamber of the King's
> Larger than this we leave, and lovelier."

But I repeat, we all come to a time when we either trail earth-clipped wings on earth-trodden ways, or fly upward!

How strange it is, in this mortal life, that the controlling power which of its own free will makes choice whether our soul's flight be upward or downward, is a power as invisible as the air we breathe, and yet like the air vital with Life. We can see the work of our hands, the pathway our feet tread; we hear the words our voices utter; we feel the touch of love by which affection seeks expression. But that which guides and prompts—hand, foot, voice, and touch—is hidden in the Unseen, though *it* is our very *self*. And so, out of the complexity of our own being, we are brought close to the realness of the unseen world. Close to the "cloud of witnesses" into which our beloved enter when from death *here*, they pass on to life *There*. A cloud of witnesses! Think of the encompassing angels!

After pondering this complexity of a soul, we can understand, I think, why in winging its way from earth to Heaven—

"The bird that soars on highest wing
Builds on the ground her lowly nest;
And she that does most sweetly sing,
Sings in the shade where all things rest.
In lark and nightingale we see
What honor hath humility."

And—

"The Saint that wears Heaven's brightest crown,
In deepest adoration bends;
The weight of glory bows him down,
Then most, when most his soul ascends;
Nearest the throne itself must be,
The footstool of humility."

And now, though it spans with scarce a halt, over eighteen months of time, I speed on to the day that prefaced Honoria Lambert's graduation from Summit Hill Academy. It was nearing the hour of sunset when Honoria entered the Hall—as the large recitation-room was called—a place that from early morning till past noon-time that day had echoed with the sound of young voices and gay laughter. For scholars, as well as teachers, had been eager over the task of transforming the somewhat dreary room into a bower-like hall,

decked by gracefully draped flags, and wreathed with fragrant cedar and pine; while huge boughs of hemlock and spruce softened the sharp corners of the long room by broken outlines of plumery branch and varied tintings of green.

When the last wreath had been hung, the last flag draped, like bees flocking to their hive, the merry company had hastened to the dormitory building to give the finishing touch to some simple robe to be worn on the morrow, or to complete the final packing of books and treasures that had accumulated during the term.

There were farewell words, too, for friend to whisper to friend, and essays to be read over, songs to sing, and the numberless last things that never can be done till the time for departure comes.

For leaving a familiar place is always a type of that last parting, after which never again we know a farewell, for thank God—

> "The farewell always lies *behind* us,
> And the welcome always lies *before*."

I wonder why we try to anticipate this 'last parting'—I wonder why we forget that the hour which holds it, holds sustaining grace too—and yet, we so crave grace for our future before the future comes, instead of walking softly in "the living grace of the living day." *Living* grace! Ah! if we did but look to the *Life*, the agony of death would lose its *sting*—not its pain—for God never asks us to call sorrow by any name but sorrow.

Life—think how it enfolds us—for, "we have a living Saviour, and a living quickening Spirit to meet our living souls. A living providence 'full of eyes before and behind' to watch working and giving souls, a living love of God filling all the world like the light of the bright summer day. Trust to the living things, and, above all, trust to the living God, for—oh! the love of it—because He lives, we shall live also."

As I said before, it was nearing twilight when Honoria entered the Hall. The great room was empty. Not a sound broke the

hush, save the monotonous tick of the old clock, and the hum of a foolish bee striving to pass the imprisoning glass of a window-pane.

More than once Honoria walked up and down the Hall, and every time she came to the entrance door, which stood wide open, she lingered to look with an eager gaze out toward the road that led up from the village —for it was well-nigh time for the daily coach to arrive. And, to Honoria, that meant the arrival of her grandparents, for Squire and Mrs. Lambert, spite their custom of seldom leaving home, were both coming to attend the graduation exercises in which Honoria was to take a leading part. And then—this was the plan—Honoria with no return to the dear Harbor-town home, was to sail for Scotland the very next week.

Squire and Mrs. Lambert were not coming alone—thus the Squire had written.—Ambrose Warner was to join them at Boston, and it was for the trio Honoria watched and waited. She grew impatient as the twilight shadows deepened down in the valley. She turned

from the open door and walked to the very end of the Hall, standing still for full half a minute, reading over in a low voice the motto which she had helped twine in cedar letters, and that Prof. Stuart had fastened above the clock.

The Professor, like Squire Lambert, was Scotch by birth and education, and it had well pleased him "to transplant not the *root*," as he said, "but the *seed* of the noble maxim of his own college of Aberdeen." And so, as the young girls wound the letters, he had dictated the words Honoria read to herself—though already she knew them: "They have said. What say they? Let them say."

Not till that minute had they been illumined with meaning for her, and so absorbed was she with the new light they revealed, she gave a quick start as a step came to a halt close by her side.

Straightway she knew it was Prof. Stuart, and, as she greeted him, a smile played about her dimpled mouth as a sunbeam plays over a rose-bud. For Honoria had a dimple, and, as

the fisher-wives about Harbor-town pier were wont to say, "It was plain to see Miss Honoria had been kissed by the angels."

These fisher-wives were Breton folk many of them, and their minds were rife with odd fancies and superstitions. Hence they accepted with never a doubt the old saying of their native land "that the infant Jesus in playful mood pressed His finger lightly on the chin of St. Barbara, who has transmitted the dimple token of loveliness and heavenly favor from generation to generation." And "a dimple was to them not only a beauty, but a sign of inward purity." And who so well deserved this mark of special grace as Honoria?

All her life she had been, to these simple people, a Gospel—a bringer of good-tidings. Material aid first—for in her childhood, Honoria and her little basket laden with comforts for the poor and feeble, were a sight, familiar as May-flowers in spring. And, when childhood had glided into maidenhood, every Sabbath, for full a year before she left home, she had passed in and out among the dwell-

ings of the hamlet people, singing now a sweet song of heavenly hope or reading words from the Book—the Book the poor love so well.

That smile that lit up Honoria's face as Prof. Stuart joined her, was truly a reflection of the smile in her heart, and yet she had never defined why she was always glad when with Prof. Stuart.

For while Honoria Lambert was full of sentiment as a bird is full of song, she was entirely free from anything like sentimentality, and she never had even thought of the secret that Prof. Stuart meant to carefully keep within his own heart.

He had struggled with himself, and, though his love for Honoria had become the dearest thing life held for him, he had determined on silence.

"The child shall never know," he had said, as he beheld her in all the fresh beauty of her young life, and contrasted it with his own more than two-score years.

But when love takes hold of the heart of a

middle-aged man, it is wont to be like the north wind, a strong impelling power. And, as Andrew Stuart looked down on the fair face so trustfully upturned toward him, almost before the words had taken form in his mind his lips had uttered—"I love you! Honoria, Honoria."

And so the tale was told. It took but one brief moment of time, and yet, that moment, held for Honoria Lambert, life's song, in a sweeter, fuller measure than ever she could hear it again. For—there never can be two first times—yet, life sometimes is like summer, and brings flowers beautiful and fragrant—only summer flowers are not spring blossoms!

Three times sixty times, the ever moving pendulum of the old clock swayed back and forth before Honoria said one word. She stood, with uplifted face still, but the smile had gone. She paid no heed to the hand outstretched toward her. Almost it seemed as though she had not heard the Professor's words. But she had—and in her heart, dur-

ing those minutes bounded by three, the story, old as the centuries, was lived over again.—For

> "Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might;
> Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, passed in music out of sight."

And so, Honoria Lambert passed from one life into another, as swiftly as a rose-bud opens into a rose. For, henceforth for her, self was no longer self alone.

All this, which in the telling reaches over from page to page, was encompassed by time as brief as the space that intervenes between the first ray of morning sunlight that illumines a mountain peak, and the quickly following glory of unclouded sunrise that floods the earth and sky with brightness.

For, it takes but a moment for love to become wide-awake, when it has been dawning in the heart—unconsciously dawning perchance—for the heart of a maiden, like our Honoria, is a tender thing—it shuts its door against dreams, even though they be sweet as poets' song.

And yet, spite the contradiction, the door of a maiden's heart is wont to be on the latch, but only for one hand to open—and for Honoria the opening hand was Andrew Stuart's, the man whose youth had been a well-nigh closed page, while she was hardly more than a prattling child.

Very strange is the ordering of events in these lives of ours. That very day, Ambrose Warner—who had loved Honoria so well for years—was coming, that very hour he was to hold her little hand in his.

But his coming was too late! too late! And yet, life is such a mystery, the sequel to his love for Honoria held a completeness Prof. Stuart's never knew.

But in the first gladness of love, hearts do not reach on to the future, the present is enough. Then, too, there are some natures that live as much in one brief year, golden with hope, as others live in a life-time of fulfilled wishes. And Honoria possessed such a nature.

IX.

WE all know how, in moments of the deepest emotion, a familiar sound will waft us back into the commonplace, swiftly as spring breezes waft blossoms from tree boughs. And yet, what we call the commonplace is changed for us, for how can it be otherwise, when our life has been touched either with the radiance of great joy, or overgloomed by the shadow of grief? Still, to Professor Stuart and Honoria, the sound of wheels crunching the gravel of the carriage drive was like some hand beckoning them back to the feelings of half an hour before.

And with no word of explanation, Honoria sped through the open door, that she might meet the coach at the last turn of the drive. But it was not the well-known stage-coach,

but a light carriage with only one passenger, —a man whose face was pale and wan—and yet, yet, surely it was Ambrose Warner.

No wonder Honoria's heart beat with a quick throb of foreboding. No wonder, all in a moment, the light of the setting sun grew dim—and then—Ambrose was by her side, he held her hand in his, he told the tale of sorrow, he made no delay about it.

Thus it happened that Honoria was brought close to joy and close to grief, both within the same hour. A contrast sharp as mid-summer calm and mid-summer storm.

This is what Ambrose told. A sudden gale had swept the Eastern coast the night before. And the vessel in which Squire and Mrs. Lambert had embarked at noon-time—a staunch, swift sailing boat, that had winged its way out of the Harbor toward the open sea, like a bird flying southward——But, why detail a story so well known—enough, when the gray light of morning dawned, that eastern shore was strewn with signs of the mid-night wreck.

Later in the day, the silent forms of Squire and Mrs. Lambert had been brought home to the stately mansion on the Cliff. And Ambrose Warner, who was waiting for their arrival at the Boston Pier, had heard—and then, with no tarrying, he had hastened on to Summit Hill, that he, rather than a stranger, should be the one to tell Honoria.

Not ten minutes after Ambrose's arrival well-nigh every inmate of the Academy knew the story of woe. Tenderness was enfolding Honoria. Kind hands and hearts were already preparing for her speedy departure.

"Take me home," were the only words she had uttered, and eagerly her eyes, with the strange new look of grief in them, had sought among the group gathered about her, for the friend who best could help her in that time of supreme agony. But Prof. Stuart was not there. Rachel was close by her side, Ambrose and Mary Warner too; but where was the man who only an hour before had told her of his love?

"Take me home—home,"—over and over she repeated the words. Poor child, she was so all unlearned in sorrow. Poor child, she did not know, love, dear love is what makes *home*—not place. And all her life long she had been so encompassed by love. But that was ended now, as far as the care of grandfather and grandmother could express it.—All ended! For the silence that had come to Squire and Mrs. Lambert, was the silence that never is broken here on earth—never.——

However heart-breaking the plea for one word—just one, never, never do the gates of that silence open.

The arrangements for Honoria's departure were speedily made. Mary Warner would accompany her, and Mrs. Manning yielded to Rachel Fleming's request that she too might make one of the sad company. They were to start at daybreak. It was all to be an overland journey, even the short sail from Five-Mile Point to Harbor-town, Ambrose planned

to avoid. He would fain, too, have spared Honoria the sight of the ruthless sea-waves had it been possible; but that he could not do.

Meanwhile, where was Prof. Stuart? Surely his place was by the side of the young girl so suddenly bereft of those who had been father and mother to her ever since she could remember. Surely he was the one to whisper words of consolation.

And yet—his absence was natural enough—spite the fact that it in very truth foreshadowed the future.

For in the hours of greatest need all through life, Honoria would be alone. No, never alone, in one sense, for always the promise for those who look to Christ is, "Lo, I am with you." And—Yes, always alone in that aloneness which has no human companionship.

I said Prof. Stuart's absence was natural, and, so it was, for when Honoria in the brightness of joy had left him to meet her grandparents, without whose blessing joy lacked

completion, he also left the Hall, but by a different path than she had taken, for he turned toward the woods.

He wanted to be alone. It was all so wonderful to him. Could it be, that the happiness of loving and being loved was truly his?

Verily for the following hour, whatever the future might bring, Andrew Stuart was happy.

She loved him! he repeated the words over and over. "She loves me—loves me."

Ah! no wonder Prof. Stuart felt the need of seeking the high hills, and communion with the Giver of the gift, for he was a man who believed; hence he recognized "every good and perfect gift cometh from above." Yes, he was a man of earnest faith—a man who strove to walk uprightly; but just for the want of courage he had left unsaid a word to Honoria, —when he told her of his love—that would shadow the future with a shadow her love even would not be strong enough to dispel. But of this he did not think as he climbed the steep up-hill path—smiling out of very gladness, and grateful, because able then to say,

and feel, Honoria's love was God's gift to him. But when darkness came, would he feel so then?

It is so much easier to say in the sunshine "the Lord gives," than it is to say in the storm, "the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away"—so much easier. And in this case specially so, for the fault was all Andrew Stuart's own. But I will not anticipate.

X.

THE days that closely followed her leaving Summit Hill Academy, were to Honoria, all her life long, dim and unreal as the memory of a dark night.

Even the parting from Prof. Stuart she could only recall in a shadowy way. She remembered her longing for him those hours after Ambrose Warner had arrived. She remembered, how, as the loneliness of sorrow, like an ice-cold hand, seemed to grasp her heart, she sought, but sought in vain, his form among those grouped around her. And then she remembered a brief time in the gray light of early morning, when she stood for a minute alone in Mrs. Manning's little parlor, and he came to her. And how, all in a moment, she felt comforted and safe as he held her cold hands in his warm clasp, and drew her trembling form close to him.

But beyond this, all was undefined, just as were the words he whispered, as he slipped a slender circlet of gold on her finger.

Ah! if those words had but told a fuller story, surely, even in her grief, Honoria would have caught their meaning—and how much of future pain they would have prevented. But Andrew Stuart, though he was a middle-aged, grave, and scholarly man, was weak, and lacking in courage, and he left the words unsaid—his bygone story untold.——

But it was as well—at least, so far as the perfecting Honoria's character—for struggle and disappointment well-nigh always strengthen an earnest soul.

Yes, it is true that "the soul is like a battle-field, where the grass grows the greener, because there battles have been fought." There are those who say, too, that "there are some herbs of comfort and assurance that dinna grow till the heart itself has graves."

While the events of that time to Honoria

were as destitute of details as a tree in winter is destitute of leaves, to Ambrose Warner all was clear and sharply defined. His eyes read the meaning of Honoria's uplifted gaze, as Prof. Stuart held her hand for a moment before parting.

It was all an open page; there was no need of spoken words to tell him, that the heart of that middle-aged man beat like an echo of his own—the only difference, that the older man, even in parting, heard the undertone music of hope; while hope for him—it was like a flower, faded!—And yet, he had loved Honoria—so long—so well.

But Ambrose was brave; he had the old Puritan strength of will, and loyalty to right. Disappointment might wound him sorely, but his life must go on—duty was no less duty, because joy had faded. The sower must sow the corn, and the golden grain, though he walk afield, amid furrows deep cut by the ploughman's plough. Have you ever watched the parable of ploughing? Ever looked at the green turf—a thousand

grass-blades to one sod? And seen, all in a moment, the sharp up-turning plough lay the grass-blades low, covering them with the gray soil of earth-clods. Have you ever looked on the same field months later, and seen the waving grain, and the ripened corn? If you have, you know the parable I mean. You know, too, how it is an index to God's dealing with the hearts of the sons and daughters of His love.

Whatever Ambrose Warner suffered, no sign of it appeared in his treatment of Honoria—only perchance there was even more of tenderness in his manner—he was, as she called him, "A strong brother to her."——

When they reached Harbor-town—at nightfall of that very day, so speedily they journeyed—they did not go to the Squire's mansion, but straightway to the Parsonage, a vine-covered nest at the foot of the steep Cliff road.

Pastor Warner and his kindly wife were watching for them—they almost overlooked their own Mary in their tender care for Hon-

oria. And it was Mrs. Warner's motherly hands that tended the weary girl that night; her motherly heart, that by its motherhood instinct understood the silence and bewilderment that enfolded Honoria, like a veil, and that to Mary and Rachel made her seem cold and reserved.

It was Mrs. Warner, too, who sat by her, till long after quiet restful sleep had closed the eyes of all others of the household. Mrs. Warner, who smoothed the hair back from Honoria's aching forehead, and expressed by tender touch, the sympathy it did not need words to tell.

By and by, Honoria slept too, but still the woman with a mother's heart watched by her side.

This tenderness of human hearts—it is such a beautiful part of life—the coming to know it, verily is one of the blessings that blossoms out of grief; and sometimes it is so hidden behind exteriors that give no hint of it. It was so with Mrs. Warner; merely looking at her one saw only a plain-

faced woman of a common enough type in New England—somewhat stern in expression, and angular in form. But—think of the soul the angels saw !

Early the next day, the usually quiet village of Harbor-town was all astir. There were comers from far and near—among them, Judge Bruce, Squire Lambert's oldest friend in America—and the two grave, portly gentlemen who were to act as executors of the Squire's will.

A delegation, too, of literary and scientific men, came on from Boston, to show this last mark of respect for one who had filled a place important among the learned, as Squire Lambert had done, spite his secluded life.

And then, there were the mourners, most of them humble folk, and all had tender, grateful memories of the Squire and his Christian wife.

But among all that vast company of people, Honoria was the only one whose sorrow had the claim of kinship.

The funeral service was held in the village church—and no barrier of social position held sway there—so they met, learned and unlearned, rich and poor, city strangers and country neighbors, all brought together by the desire to express affection and respect for those gone from earth.

Not till sundown did the church bell cease its tolling that day. And not till sundown, did the last group of sorrowing men and women turn away from the newly-made graves in the hillside burial-ground.

This time of which I tell was long before the custom of covering newly-made graves with flowers had become universal; but every dweller about that country and coast-side knew Squire and Mrs. Lambert's love for all blooming things; and though there had been no planning for it, almost every one among the lowly folk that followed in the long procession to the hillside resting-place, carried in their hands some bud or blossom which they left on the graves.—For, just as flowers bloom in wildest nooks, so among the most unlearned

there is an inborn understanding of the tender significance of God's flowers on mortal graves!——

"Consider the lilies."—Truly, these words uttered by the Lord Christ, have become the keynote of tender consolation for sorrowing hearts all the world over.—For "flower life and human life have a wonderful correspondence to each other," flowers are always whispering—if we listen to hear—"the mortal shall bloom into immortality."——

From the graves Honoria returned to the parsonage,—Rachel Fleming and Mary Warner taking her place at the mansion, where there was much coming and going all the livelong day. But only the executors of Squire Lambert's will and Judge Bruce tarried over for the morrow, when an early hour was appointed for the reading of the formal paper. A lengthy document, they all saw, as Judge Bruce spread the closely written pages out before him on the library table.

Honoria was present; she was very pale, but

calm, and so quiet her foot-fall had hardly been noticed as she entered the room and sought a seat within the shadow of the alcove window, where the heavy curtains were still undrawn.

It seemed strange that those pages, traced by a hand that never again would guide pen or pencil, yet held the girl's destiny in a certain way, for she was not one to lightly put aside any wish, even if not a positive command that her grandfather had therein expressed.

Rachel Fleming was with her—and, behind her chair, with one hand resting on it, stood Prof. Stuart.

He had arrived early that morning. His heart had been with Honoria every hour of the day before, but it had been impossible, without neglect of duty, for him to leave Summit Hill before the closing exercises of the Academy. And yet, I repeat, his heart had been with Honoria all the time; we all know this mysterious power by which we can, as it were, be in two places at once.

It gives us such a firm grasp on immortality

—so much that we can not explain by words becomes plain through the knowledge that our souls are not bound, like our bodies, by time, and earthly counted miles. And, why need we find it harder to believe that our loved ones who have gone from earth to heaven are close by us, than it is for us to feel the nearness of those who are still on earth, yet separated from us. Why is it harder for us to feel this?—Why?

XI.

JUDGE BRUCE assumed a thoroughly professional voice and manner as he read the somewhat strange terms of Squire Lambert's will, though he had been his warm personal friend for years.

There is no need for us to go through it. The Squire left a large property wisely devised, as far as it included his son, and legacies for Scotch relations. American friends, also, were remembered, and not one of the servants forgotten, while Pastor and Mrs. Warner were liberally provided for. All details, too, that had to do with Mrs. Lambert, were so clearly stated that had she survived her husband she would still have been guarded by his care.

But spite this, it truly seemed as though the Squire had a premonition that he and his wife would leave the world at a time not far apart. For, in planning for Honoria, he made

no mention of the influence her grandmother's life would exert.

In any case she, Honoria, on her grandfather's death became an heiress. This was all expressed in formal legal terms, but when it came to giving directions for her future, the Squire seemed to forget he was inditing a binding document, so peculiar and almost wrong, were the restrictions he imposed.

The first clause stated, that if he died before Honoria had completed her school-life, and embarked for Scotland and the continental tour, that plan was to be relinquished; and she, in its stead, was to immediately sail for Jamaica, where she was to remain under her father's guardianship till she came of age.

Then followed a page in which Squire Lambert referred to the young girl's acceptance of the *spirit* of the Holy Grail legends, as a controlling life influence and inspiration. And his wish, that if, when her years counted twenty-five she still held allegiance to the desire to "minister rather than to be ministered unto," she should become owner of the

Harbor-town estate and mansion, provided she opened wide its doors as a place of shelter for destitute widows and orphans—consenting thus, to find her earthly happiness in serving others.

But, if she decided to marry, then this refuge for the needy was to be forfeited, and the entire property at Harbor-town given to an astronomical association recently formed in Boston.

Judge Bruce and the executors of the will did not hesitate in expressing their decided disapproval of these latter conditions.

Nevertheless it was legal—disapproval could not change that, nor the fact that the Squire when he made it was entirely in his right mind.

As for Honoria, parts of the will she hardly listened to; she was bewildered, so much had come into her life suddenly. She was, too, only a girl of eighteen, and the young live in the present. The terms of her grandfather's will did not demand decision for seven years —and somehow she had no power just then to look forward, and she only dimly grasped

the idea that her position toward Prof. Stuart was involved.

That she loved him, that he loved her, she realized in all the dearness of the knowledge. But as at the first she had felt there could be no formal engagement without her grandfather's consent, now she felt she must wait for her father's permission—and then—then she would think.

It was really harder for Prof. Stuart those days than for Honoria, for, understanding her nature as he did, he knew when the time for calm thought came, suffering awaited her as well as himself. For he knew her grandfather had imposed a decision that involved opposing duties.

He knew, too, she would deem it a grave thing to cast aside a refuge that would be so precious to many lonely, destitute women and children for the sake of securing her own personal happiness, and even that of one dearer than herself. He knew she would ask, "What did two individuals count against the many?" and the numberless other subtle questions

that would gather around the subject. And in his heart Prof. Stuart called the Squire's will not only unjust, but even cruel.

Ambrose Warner was not far from the same opinion—he had been present, and had listened to the reading of the paper with a face growing sterner every minute, yet as he listened, verily he was glad, too, glad that his own love for Honoria had been unspoken.

I have entered more fully into all this, because I want to do Prof. Stuart full justice, and it is in some measure an excuse for his allowing Honoria to sail away, as he did, without telling her of his youth and early history.

Yes, she sailed only two weeks later for Jamaica, the island that in her imagination, all her life long, had been a dream of beauty. She felt no dread of the voyage as Ambrose had feared she would. The sea had always been like a friend to her, and its murmuring waves were still musicful. She knew, too, that—

"O'er the deep,
God's love eternal watch doth keep."

And she did not associate the ending of her grandparents' mortal life, so much with the ocean as she did with the rocky shore, treacherous reefs, and wild wind.

She was calm when the hour came for bidding farewell to the sorrowing company of friends who went with her to the ship's side—and who lingered watching it sail away till the white sails grew dim—and at last it passed beyond the sight of even the most loving gazer.

XII.

THE days and nights of Honoria's voyage were marked by fair weather, and the influence of sky and sea were restful after the excitement of the past weeks.

Sometimes it almost seemed to her as though she heard in audible sound the Voice of Heavenly Love whispering, "Peace, be still," and, she was still, and yet her mind was wide awake in this quietness of her soul.

She hardly left, from sunrise until after sundown, the low-cushioned seat the captain had arranged for her within the shelter of an out-jutting corner of the pilot-house.

It was strange, familiar as she had been from childhood with the sea, she yet found the being *on* it, so unlike the being *by* it.

The ocean off alone by itself, as she was now learning to know it, was so different from the story the waves told as they came rolling

landward, following one another in ever restless pursuit.

In a letter to Rachel Fleming, Honoria tried to explain this sense of *rest* and *unrest* that mid-ocean and near-shore water gave her.

"You will know what I mean," she wrote, "if you watch the waves some day when the tide is in-coming. Here in mid-sea they seem a type to me of life with God—the life of a Christian—while by the shore they are so typical of souls, seeking, and yet finding no firm foundation, because they struggle so in their own strength as it were, each seeming to strive to out-reach the other.

"Watch the tiny drops, how they throw themselves forward, how they struggle up the sandy beach, only to straightway glide back into the restlessness again. Yes, it is to me, like a soul doubting and questioning. I long to stand on the shore for a moment just to say, 'Wait, little waves—do not struggle so—by and by the sun will warm you, purify and draw you up to float in fleecy clouds across the blue sky.'

"But here in mid-ocean it is different—it is so much more restful—as though the very waves felt the safe encompassing of Him, who 'holds the waters in the hollow of His hand.' And, it is natural this should be so, for, by the shore, we are like children who call the murmur of the sea-shell the song of the sea; whereas that murmur is naught more than a faint echo of the great song which has been singing on beneath the ocean waves ever since God called the gathering 'together of the waters—seas—and He saw that they were good.'

"It is so blessed to know, if we listen with the heart of faith, we can catch an echo of this endless song, which is but another version of the Angels' song of 'Good-will and peace,' and those echoes, if we interpret them into deeds, surely they may become pulse beats of the great *Life* pulsation that thrills the universe."

This brief extract from one of Honoria's letters, is like hearkening to one song, when the singer knows a hundred, for new thoughts

came to her every hour—thoughts, that like the rounds in Jacob's ladder, served for stepping-places for angels ascending and descending.—For what are holy thoughts, but angels whispering to the soul?

Yet, spite the peace that filled Honoria's soul with quietness those days, there were problem questions, too, that asked for reply, and that now and then trailed low their cloud of doubt.

It was well it should be thus, for "out of doubt comes faith," just as "out of grief comes hope," for "to the upright there ariseth light in the darkness."——

Think what it would be to live in a world without shadow.

Think;

"Were there no night we could not read the stars,
The heavens would turn into a blinding glare:
Freedom is best seen through prison bars
And rough seas make the haven passing fair:
We can not measure joys, but by their loss.
When blessings fade away, we see them then;
Our richest clusters grow around the *cross!*
And in the night-time angels sing to men.

"The seed must first lie buried deep in earth,
Before the lily opens to the sky;
So light is sown, and gladness has its birth,
In the dark deeps where we can only cry.
Life out of Death is Heaven's unwritten law,
Nay, it is written in myriad forms.
The victor's palm grows on the field of war,
And strength and beauty are the fruit of storms."

Chief among the problem questions was the ever recurring 'Why?' Why had her life's outlook so suddenly changed? Why had her grandfather involved her future with so deep a perplexity? And where did true self-denial meet and touch a false idea of self-sacrifice?——

In her journal she thus notes this time and its sequel:

"I have come to the place," so she writes, "where I no longer will try to seek the *Why* of God's Providences. I am content to feel there may be no other reason than that they are to make us *trust* in spite of them, and surely these lessons can be best learned by living faithfully and truthfully, *doing* the immediate duty, rather than reasoning out the

process. And try we ever so hard, we can not treat God's Providences as we do processes in Nature. No—all we have to do is to strive to lift ourselves up to them, and let them do their work in our souls.

"Nature teaches us this, for the flower that drinks in the sunshine would not grow any better by deciding what it is to become through the influence of the sunshine; all *it has to do* is to expand its leaves and grow, giving out the full fragrance with which the Lord blesses it.——Just doing, that is the flower's part, as it is mine. And I will try to look away from self, up to Christ, remembering 'nothing dwarfs the soul more speedily than too much introspection,' because 'we are such lovers of self we can not long be trusted to dwell even on our short-comings'!"

I give you this in-look into Honoria's heart-book at that time, that you may know something of her mental and spiritual condition when she entered on the life of 'Gospel days' that followed one the other through

the years she spent in the Island home.—Years of which her first glimpse of Jamaica's Blue Mountains seemed verily a type. It was early morning when she first saw their deeper blue sharply defined against the lighter tinting of the sky; and then came a near view, that included richly cultivated plains and hills, and then Port Royal was sighted. And half an hour later a tiny boat came sailing over the calm water, and though no signal was given, Honoria straightway knew the tall man that held the rudder was none other than her father, whom her grandmother always called "my laddie—my ain bairn."

XIII.

IT so often happens in life that the most intense minutes are closely followed by the seemingly trivial. It was so after Honoria Lambert's meeting with her father. There was a moment of silence, one quick embrace, a brief word of welcome, during which Ralph Lambert's voice was tremulous with emotion.

And then it was over, and with the courtesy of a polished man of the world, rather than the tenderness of a parent, he asked ordinary questions in an ordinary tone.

"Had the voyage proved wearisome?" "Would she have strength for the drive from Port Royal to Flamboyante?"—this being the title by which Mr. Lambert's home was known through the Island; for so thickly the scarlet and yellow flowered plant grew all about its near neighborhood.

"The little brother and sisters will be watching for your coming," Mr. Lambert said, but he made no mention of the mother, who, in Honoria's mind, filled the place of a companion she would dearly love, rather than holding any maternal relationship.

Mrs. Lambert was still a comparatively young woman, Honoria knew. In fact she was not yet forty, though she looked older, for her rosy English complexion had faded under the tropical sky. There was a tired, worn look in her face, too, and a restlessness of manner unlike the repose that is wont to proclaim nationality.

Truly, life in this new home could not fail to be an experience all unlike her by-gone to Honoria. Had her heart been less loving she would have caught a hint of this, the very hour of arrival, for she would have felt more keenly the blank of her father's greeting. But it escaped her, because she was too sincere-hearted, too true and full of love herself to see anything but the loving and the good in others.

This is one of the blessings that belong to a loving, sincere nature. It has power to diffuse an illumining light which absorbs the faults of others, casting them far into the background, rather than pressing them into foremost view.

It was a tiny boat which carried passengers from the Clipper to Port Royal pier. On embarking in it, Honoria stole her hand into her father's and nestled close to his side, with the confidence of a trusting child.

It was all strange to her, laughingly she said; she was half afraid. The boat seemed like a sea-shell, in comparison with the staunch skiff in which she had sailed about the Harbor-town coast. And added to her clinging clasp of Mr. Lambert's hand, she looked up into his face with a smile that for a second met a responsive smile, for it was "one of those genuine smiles that originate only in the soul."

And that smile recurred more than once before the Flamboyante gates opened, for during the drive that followed their landing,

Honoria talked as naturally to her father as a spring breeze plays over tree-boughs.—And this very simplicity and naturalness stirred Mr. Lambert's most tender memories, and the best part of his nature.

Her language was anecdotical. A tale interblended with light and shade—for she told of her grandparents—and the night of the sudden storm; of her happy childhood; of her grandmother's love for her absent son; of the home-garden, and haunts about the shore and in the forest, that had been familiar to Ralph Lambert when he was a boy.

And thus, by being her own true self, Honoria traced in her father's mind and heart the first impressions of the influence which made her life in his home a Gospel life, not only to him, but to all who knew her.

In spite of all this, I do not want you to picture Honoria as a marvel of a girl, because she was not.—I can think this minute of many maidens whom I know, with minds as quick, hearts as tender. What, then, was the secret of her influence?——

In one of Robertson's sermons he gives a rule, which holds the best reply I know to that question, for Honoria lived in the spirit of the words:

"The first lesson of Christian life is this, be *true;* and the second this, be *true;* and the third this, be *true.*"

Living in this spirit, how could her influence help being what it was, for of necessity it became a reflection of the Truth taught by Him who said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."——

PART III.

" If each for each be all he can,
A very God is man to man."

I.

IT would be difficult to picture a life more unlike her past than that which Honoria led during the years she spent in Jamaica.

She was by nature of an adaptive temperament; hence she accepted the strangeness of her surroundings with an easy grace that made her a general favorite. Nevertheless, she lived much alone, for it was long before any one came close to her heart in responsive sympathy with the earnest side of life, and it was that side which meant most to her. Still, her loneliness was not a thing to regret, for it proved a time of spiritual growth. It is wont to be thus when one is forced "to listen to their own souls, and the Voice of the Lord speaking therein."

I suppose this is why these pause-places come in life, shutting us in, as it were, alone with God and self. Places where we are fed

with the Heavenly Manna, "that food of the mind which is Truth; of the heart which is Love."——

To Honoria there was abundant food, too, for her eyes — for Nature in that tropical island unfolded a wealth of enjoyment for one who delighted in Nature as she did.

But spite this, and the blessed fact of her soul's felt nearness to the Infinite, it was a dreary time in many ways to our Honoria. And, this showed no lack of trust in God on her part, no lack of love in the Lord's tender encompassing care over her. For God had sent the trials, and He meant them to work their work of discipline.

Remember it is written, "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth,"—and "No chastening for the present seemeth joyous, but afterward it yieldeth peaceable fruits." Ah! think of that 'afterward'!

Certain it is, that while for Honoria every passing day for many a month only served to deepen her longing for her grandparents, she yet, through her very loneliness and sorrow, made blessed discoveries.

Perhaps one of the most precious to a mind like hers—that from childhood had sought the *Why?*—was the recognizing that there is nothing wrong in our asking out of deep grief "Why?" If only we ask in the right spirit—and not the spirit of "What have I done that I suffer thus?"—not the spirit that borders on complaint, and even reproach against the Lord who sent the trial. For that is not the Christian way of asking "Why?" No; the Christian "Why?" comes from a humble, contrite heart, that seeks with earnest desire to know the Truth hidden in sorrow that thus God's rod may become God's staff.

Honoria missed her friends, too, and the perplexity of conflicting duties imposed by her grandfather's will sometimes pressed for answer, even though she had said to that question—"Wait till the time comes."

But through all emotions, peaceful and perplexing alike, Prof. Stuart's few words of love still kept their place in her heart, and all the time they were gaining a greater dearness.

The fact that he had made no reference to

them when they parted, did not trouble her; she appreciated that his silence was caused by her changed position, not by any change in his feelings—his farewell gaze told her this.

Beside the memory of that look, Honoria still wore the slender gold ring he had slipped on her finger. A mute token—but it always seemed to smile at her whenever she looked at her hand. And yet, through the secret that ring held, and which Andrew Stuart had weakly refrained from telling, trouble was all the time coming nearer to Honoria. The bitterest sorrow that can out-spring from love —even doubt of the one loved.——

But all this is a far wandering from Honoria's arrival at Flamboyante, where even the trees and flowers, birds and insects were strange to her. An unlikeness so all-pervading it extended to the azure of the sky, and the coloring of the water of the Bay, while, as for the High-road, that led by the way of the open country to her father's home, it was a prolonged marvel of before unknown floral beauty. On either side it was bordered by hedges

of cactus and dagger-plants, over which wild jasmine and light blue and scarlet convolvuli wreathed their flowery pendants of bloom, while the whole landscape glowed with a golden tint caught from the bushes of allamandas that were in full yellow blossom.

On passing through the entrance gate, this shimmer of golden light was increased by the wind playing over the flower-laden bushes, till everything seemed bathed in a glory of softened brightness.

But when within the home enclosure Honoria had no thought for golden light, graceful vine, or fragrant flowers, so eager was she to catch sight of the brother and little sisters whom her father said would be watching for her coming.

True enough, they were waiting. A sudden turn in the drive brought the group in full sight. A pretty picture, standing as they were among flowers of every color, and beneath the shade of a mango-tree that was half hidden by a creeping vine that clung in picturesque intwining over boughs and leafage.

But though Nature's tinting of flower and shrub was all so brilliant, the children were pale-faced little creatures, looking even more so in contrast with their swarthy nurse in her gay turban and bright-hued gown. They were timid children too. Honoria, quick as she was to meet gladness by gladness, immediately felt their lack of joyous child-life, as one after the other they lifted their little faces for her to kiss.

But before she had time to wonder over it, their mother slowly advanced, and at sight of her, Honoria, not waiting for her father's somewhat formal introduction, sped across the flower-starred turf, and with an ease of motion, that was graceful as a blossom shaken from a tree, she met with a clasp of affection the hand extended toward her.

And watching the meeting of daughter and step-mother, Mr. Lambert smiled again, the smile that lit up his countenance with a light new to it.

Even the children straightway seemed to catch the happiness Honoria's presence dif-

fused, for when their mother bade the nurse keep them half an hour longer out in the still dewy freshness of the early morning, their little faces clouded with disappointment, and the boy Fergus took a tight hold of Honoria's dress, as he ventured to plead that he might stay with his new sister.

Mrs. Lambert's refusal was decided, but she immediately yielded when his father interfered, saying:

"Let the lad have his way for once," and with a laugh that his children did not often hear, he added, "A new sister is not to be found every day, like a new flower."

And so, the husband and wife, Honoria and little Fergus stepped across the threshold of the home. A threshold which opened on a broad gallery, wide as an ordinary room, and where a light repast was spread for the travellers.

Soon after, Mrs. Lambert proposed showing Honoria the rooms prepared for her, and together they went up the winding stairway.

There were two rooms—a sitting-room and a bedroom ; both had an air of English comfort, and were fitted up with more of luxury than she had expected, used as she was to New England simplicity. But their chief charm were the views from the wide windows, that all opened on to balconies that were overhung with flowering vines.

All this time Fergus had kept close to Honoria. With a child's quick instinct he discovered he had found a friend as well as a sister. And verily he had—a friend tender and loving, who even that very first day began to help the boy—for noticing how his soul was stirred by the beauty of nature, she made no delay in telling him of the Heavenly Father who made all beauty.

And so her Gospel work in the Island home began—first, by causing her father to smile—a *soul* smile, and next, by guiding a child's thoughts upward. And Christ said, "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily, I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."

II.

NOT more than three months after Honoria's arrival, her father suddenly announced that on the morrow he expected to leave home for an indefinite time. An announcement which met with a quick remonstrance on Mrs. Lambert's part; and yet blended in with the petulance of her words, there sounded a note of anxiety that roused Honoria's sympathy. An emotion she was not apt to feel toward her step-mother, for there was about Mrs. Lambert much which sorely tried her; and she often blamed herself for harshness of judgment. Oftener, in fact, than she was to blame, for Mrs. Lambert had in her the power of being a very different wife and mother.

But, like many another woman, when a few months after marriage she met the fact that she was to know much of disappointment, she

weakly yielded, instead of bravely striving to conquer adverse circumstances rather than letting them conquer her.

One great mistake she made was the sadly commonplace one of letting her mind go empty, because she did not always meet with responsive sympathy from her husband; and perhaps there is nothing that so soon dims a husband's love as daily contact with an empty mind. For mind is so much more than body, that a bright, intelligent mind, an understanding smile will hold affection with a firmer and more abiding clasp than the mere charm of youthful beauty of form or feature.

But, as a partial excuse for Mrs. Lambert, I must tell that her disappointment had been bitter, and her anxiety was wearing and constant. For Ralph Lambert's early lack of rectitude had not diminished with age. He was a false man—just as he had been a false boy and youth. And added to this, not long after his second marriage a reckless spirit of speculation had taken possession of him.

More than once,—and this his wife knew,—

he had even ventured to run the risk of losing his home, and all for some game of chance. As for his estate, it was deeply involved at the time of his parents' death. Then the increase of income that came to him lifted the pressure of pecuniary care for a time; and with that burden eased, hope had filled his wife's heart, especially after Honoria's coming had made home bright and attractive to him once more; but at the first word of home-leaving Mrs. Lambert's heart sank.

It was the first open disagreement at which Honoria had been present, and it hurt her almost as keenly as if she had been a sharer in the contest of words.

I will not tarry over the details of that hour; I only refer to it that you may know of Honoria's experiences, and the lessons that came to her through them. Hard lessons for a young, tender heart to learn — and yet through their teaching she came to know that dear as happiness is, there is a blessing still better; she came to understand, with a depth of earnestness she might otherwise have failed

to feel so intensely, "that earthly life is not the *Right* of happiness, it is the *Duty* of development."——

She came to feel, too,

> "Through sharpest anguish hearts may wring,
>
>
>
> Yet, suffering is a holy thing;
> Without it, what were we?"

Elevation through sorrow, whatever the sorrow may be, it was this Honoria strove to attain—and its first fruit was desire for work, and "the desire to work for God is always a desire which is granted."

She began in a simple way; first a daily school, only lasting two hours—for the native children—and then a Bible reading for the plantation workers and the home servants.

Her father made light of her effort; nevertheless, he more than once joined the little company of a Sabbath afternoon, as they met under the mango-trees.

Meanwhile, as she sought to help others, her own soul became more conscious of its own needs and weakness—for it seemed those days

as though she had to struggle with more faulty tendencies in herself than she had ever known before. And the higher she mounted in the spiritual life, the closer she was drawn to the weak and feeble of will and purpose, and so her work increased.

All the time, if you had asked her what she was doing, she would have replied—"Only the least little things." And if you had added, "Perhaps in the 'little things' you will find the hidden treasure, the San Grail," she would have said, "No; oh, no." And yet, had she not found it? For what is that Holy thing that wins for the possessor a Heavenly Blessing? Lowly service, I think, rendered for Christ's sake.

But it was better, that to Honoria it was still a treasure, "higher up" than she had yet attained. Just as it is better that while here on earth, we should not be able to solve all the doubts and fears that assail the soul. For if we could, we should win the crown before the crowning day. And crowning is not for here. "There remaineth a rest for

the people of God."—"Be thou faithful unto death," and then, the "Crown of Life."——

Honoria wrote Ambrose Warner freely as she would have done had he been her brother, and in telling him of this time she calls her experiences "threefold." Her letter reads:

"First, I am brought close to the mystery of the Unseen,—close, to that silence, which with all my longing I am powerless to break.

"The next experience is a new insight into the evil of this world, and the emptiness of hearts, the bitterness of a living sorrow.

"And the next is the being brought face to face with the soul's limitations, and the great army of perplexing questions that come trooping into one's mind as life broadens its outlook.

"I am planning writing you three letters —each one stating a separate experience— and then, when your replies come, I will bind them into a threefold wisdom-full page and keep it within reach of my hand, so that when I am more than wontedly bewildered I can read them and they will make all plain.——

"But as I write this, I almost seem to hear you say—'Look for the solving of your questions not to man's wisdom, but off unto Jesus.' And I do try to look to Him. But —I long for human companionship, too. Is it wrong?"

I will copy extracts from these three letters as Honoria wrote them, for if she is to be to you a "Gospel," you need to know the way she trod before her soul came into the clear shining of that Gospel light promised the seeking soul. It is a wonderful promise—"Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires; and I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones."

III.

COPY OF LETTER TO AMBROSE WARNER.

"FLAMBOYANTE, Island of Jamaica.

"I said I would ask you to tell me of the Unseen. Ask you to explain for me the mystery of death *here*, as a condition of our entrance to life *There*. But, how can you explain when no Voice has come back to tell us of the Beyond?—And yet, so many thoughts have come to me as I sorrow for my departed; thoughts that hold so much of comfort, I would fain know, have I a right to let them come murmuring consolation, as though they were in very truth angel whispers?

"Even for the heart-breaking silence I have found soothing, for is not this silence on the part of our dear ones, in essence like the silence of our Saviour who said, 'It is expedi-

ent for you that I go away, for if I go away, I will send the Comforter to you, and He will bring *all things to your remembrance'* ? Were there ever words so wide in their embrace as those two—'*all things.*'—Think how, in the first hours of anguish they come freighted with the assurance that our loved ones are safe.

"If we ask—Why?—they bring to remembrance Christ's own answer, 'I go to prepare a place for you. I *will receive* you unto myself.'—This sureness that they are with Christ, whether they sleep or whether they wake, is to me the uplifting clasp of the Everlasting Arms in the darkest hour of grief.

"And then, though I do not well know how to put it into words, we who stay here on earth seem brought by great sorrow into so near a fellowship with the Risen Lord. It is as though we were being permitted, too, to bear some part of the woe this world bears for sin, lifting it up as it were with Christ, for had there been no sin there would have been no sorrow. And when the sorrow comes

as mine has come through the departure of father and mother—for my grandparents were that to me—it seems such a wondrously close nearness to Him, for He must know all about it. He who is touched with feeling for us—He who knew for a moment the hiding of the Father's face. Yes, surely, by the cry, 'Why hast Thou forsaken Me?' we may know that He knew the agony of separation, even the loneliness of orphanhood. And yet He will not leave us orphans, for He said, 'I will come unto you.'

"Tell me—is it wrong for me to call the consolations that come from these thoughts my 'Cleft in the Rock'?

"Other comforts shine, too, out of the '*all things*,' brought to remembrance by the Holy Spirit—for I think the 'all things' include the truth that

> "'Every bird that sings,
> And every flower that stars the elastic sod,
> And every breath the summer brings
> To the pure spirit is a word of God.'

"Ah! to have a heart so crystal pure, that 'all things' reflected in it would become thus

a message from the *Unseen*, that shines through the *Seen*, assuring us heavenly realities surround our beloved ones, even as earthly realities now surround us. Feeling thus, I look at the beauty all around me, sometimes through glad tears of wonderment, for it is written, 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man what God hath prepared for them that love Him.' And my grandparents did love God—and think of the beauty they now behold! Every hour of grandmamma's life, I think, was passed in the recognized Presence of the Unseen Friend, she so often reminded me of the man of old 'who walked with God.' And now, she no longer walks with Him here, but truly I think she does *There*, amid the green pasture-lands of Heaven, and by the still waters of the River of Life.

"The *beauty* of holiness her dear example taught me; and is not the having such a 'remembrance' a blessing even in the bitterness of loneliness? I think it is.

"I said my eyes sometimes fill with tears

of glad wonderment as I think of all they are seeing now; but sometimes I shed other tears, tears of sorrow for my own self, and there is nothing that is so weak as self-pity; nevertheless, even when I do thus weep, I am over-arched by the rainbow of sympathy—for 'Jesus wept.' He knows the meaning and the why of all tears.

"What puzzles me most in my thoughts of those gone to Heaven, is almost a contradiction in my own feelings. I believe they live, for Christ said—'In me shall all be made alive.' Heaven is no far-off place. What we call crossing the 'River of Death,' is no long journey—one minute here, the next *there*. Yes—I believe it is no more than going 'from one room into another.' And yet, after that going, all is changed. You are miles and miles away from me; but, as I write, the miles are as nothing—because I feel your hand will hold what my hand has written—your eye read what my heart is saying, but with *them* there is no such meeting. Try and try, though I may, I can not bridge the silence and the mystery.——

"How strange it is, that we thus feel the binding limitations of mortality even at the very time we feel most sure of our immortality. For Heaven does open before the pass-word 'Faith.' And faith lights up the way our dear ones have gone—like a beacon shining from the Old on to the New Testament. Its central glory—'*Christ is Risen.*' The Christ without whom no Christian dies. Think, from Heaven the Risen Lord looks down and sees one, and then another, and He prays—'Father, let this one be with me—even here, where I am.' And the reaping angels gather in a safe enfolding the one for whom the Saviour asks—and earth is left for Heaven. I wonder we so dread the dying hour, when we believe it is the path leading to Life.

"But, my letter is lengthening beyond mail-bag limits—and your patience, too, I ween. Still, there is much I long to write—the beauty that is so everywhere in this fair island of the sea, makes me so feel the Infinite—and 'Nature enfoldeth a lesson sweet to me,' that I fain would share with you."

IV.

EXTRACTS FROM THE SECOND OF HONORIA'S "THREEFOLD" LETTERS.

"YOU will think me like the Indians, of whom they tell that when they come to some difficult mountain pass, new and strange, they choose the wisest man for a leader, 'and they follow his guidance so closely that though thousands tread the same path it shows the foot-prints of but one.' For I want to ask your guidance, and then follow it closely in meeting the trouble that I call 'a living trial.' I can not give you the details, but I want to ask is the help I have found in bearing this sorrow a right help? For, sometimes I fear lest I may find comfort, not so much from the Spirit's revealing as from my own thoughts. But—can we call thoughts our own? Do they not come to us from

Above, like all good gifts? I know you will answer, Yes.

"To return to the special trial of which I write—it does not seem to me a trouble of God's 'sending,' so much as man's making. Can we make this distinction?——

"When first I came to know how the innocent suffer through and for the wrong-doing of the guilty, I was almost crushed by the knowledge. And then—I found help where I found it when my first life-sorrow came.

"But I repeat, before I take the full comfort of what seems to me a shining truth, I want to ask you if I am justified in taking it. What I would express is that in the Bible, like a tide underlying the onward flow of a broad river, there runs a statement of Truth that is made from the stand-point of history—'A thread of history, as it were, developing revelation.'

"Thinking thus when I read the Psalms and the Prophets, the Gospels and the Epistles, they become to me the outgrowth of some *real* life experience. And regarding

them thus gives me an added strength to meet the evil of the world. You know from Genesis on how we find example after example of men rising from the depths of sinfulness to the heights of holiness. And this gives such encouragement for those we love, and who fail and fall—such encouragement for our own failures.

"And now, follow for a minute the thought that the Bible is an outgrowth of real experiences as well as an inspired revelation. And tell me, do *I* carry the thought too far? It grows so full; for may we not believe that our Saviour taught from the inner history of His own life?—and by this does He not lift us up into a nearer possibility of sharing in His sympathy and pity for sorrowing, sinning men and women, till it is not the *sinner* we shrink from, but the *sin?*

"Then, too, as we catch fuller inlooks into His perfect holiness—'tempted, yet without sin'—we so see our own distance from perfection, truly after such a sight of our own evil hearts, how can we help being tender to all who fail?

"I was interrupted yesterday by one of the Lord's chosen teachers—a child.——I sometimes think this little brother of mine teaches me more than ever I can teach him. He is such a trustful child, and he tries so hard to overcome his faults. What a proof of divine wisdom shines in the child example Christ gave. In such things we *see* inspiration—for *no one* child, as we know childhood, could stand forth a perfect example—and so it is commanded, 'become as a little child.'"

The last page of Honoria's letter is quite unlike the grave thoughts I have copied, for it tells of a drive out beyond the confines of the "Plantation"—out into the very heart of the Island's beauty.

"If I were a fairy," thus she writes, "I would touch your dreams to-night and bid you gaze on the beauty we beheld—the *we* means Fergus and myself.——

"Such a contrast of color as was spread out before us, words can give no more than a hint of the wondrous effect. 'Purple, crim-

son, and scarlet, like the curtains of God's tabernacle.' And oh, the flowers, the flowers!—and yet, a sweet-briar rose that it took but a moment to gather and fasten in my belt, meant more to me than all the tropical wealth of blossoms. For, all in a moment, it lifted my heart across the wide stretch of ocean miles, and I was home again—in the dear old garden.—Yes, for a moment, I felt like a child once more, walking the familiar paths with my hand held safe in my grandfather's.—But it was only a moment, and then I was here again, answering Fergus as he asked question after question.

"It was moonlight when we returned by the way of Port Royal. The waters of the Bay were as smooth as glass, and all aglow, not with silvery moonshine like that which falls on the Harbor at home, but with the golden light of this tropical region where brightness of color is queen."

V.

EXTRACTS FROM HONORIA'S THIRD LETTER.

"YOUR reply to my letters has come. And you tell me thoughts that outshine from pondering God's Word can not be wrong.—But, you give me two warnings—one, that I must remember I may not always walk in the clear light of faith, as I have done these last months—and then you bid me remember while meditation is wont to bring a blessing, we must be careful not to take it upon ourselves to decide who, in a spiritual sense, shall be the nuns and monks in God's service, and who the soldiers of the cross. You tell me while the fruits of the spirit are nourished by meditation, yet they grow strong by exposure to wind and storm, sunshine and shadow.—I think what you mean is, that what we have to do is to work

out our salvation, Christ working *in* us, and choosing the conditions of our service.—Hence, if His work is to perfect grace in us by hermit-like discipline, He will lead us into sick-rooms, and by nightly vigils to a fuller knowledge of the 'Life *hid* with Christ in God,' or if it be that we are to wage a warfare with the temptations that assail an active life, He will lead us out and into it as He did the crusaders of old. What we have to do is to hold our hearts open to His leading—and not warp them by one-sided clinging to aggressive or meditative life. I see the danger you fear for me. I will try to remember both warnings, the one held in the words, 'A want of faith is sometimes permitted as a trial of faith'—and the one suggested in the words, 'sometimes for the sake of life we lose the ends which make life worth living.'——

"I see, even the trying to fashion self after the pattern of heavenly things demands great watchfulness and close keeping to Christ, lest it weaken into self-absorption. The thought

you gave me, which I want to fix in my memory next to this danger is so full. 'The working *in us* is God's part, the working *out* in word, act, thought, character, is *ours*.' Indeed I will try to work *out*. And I am finding new opportunities every day, for here on the Island so many hearts ache, spite the care-free manner of the natives; and the story of Jesus is so dear to them when once they catch its holy meaning.

"Only last evening, sitting in the moon-glow, with the whisper of the leaves overhead, and the air laden with the hum of insect life, I told a weeping girl—a nut-brown mulatto—the simple story of Redeeming Love, and all day long I have heard in my heart her murmured words—'But—will He love me—me?'——

"The children's mother, Mrs. Lambert, was standing by my side as I told the story of Love, and she stole her hand into mine, though she is not wont to show affection—and I knew it was because she too had listened. When we were alone she asked: 'Do

you believe it all?' adding—'speculation and doubt have darkened so much.' 'It is Christ's promise,' I answered; 'If any man will *do* His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God.'—And then I was still, while the soft voice of Nature seemed to take up the sacred words and enforce them. It was an hour of such holy calm and beauty.

"But presently Mrs. Lambert said, 'I find the conditions of becoming a Christian so hard.'—Then came a thought of your letter—and I replied, '"It is God who worketh *in us* to will and to do." Ask Him, and help is sure.'—But she only repeated, 'It is so hard, and how is one to get the hardness out when once it is in the heart?'—For a moment I did not know what to answer—then I told her, the hardness would not go by thinking about it, and trying to make feeling; but by going just as she was to Christ because she *needed* Him.——

"We did not talk much longer, but as we parted for the night she kissed me, and whispered, 'You have helped me.'

"Since then I have been wondering if 'helping others,' may not be the Holy Grail God means me to seek. 'Helping others,' even though the task be a lowly service,—it would surely be a blessed one. To render it, I must 'not be afraid to touch the wrong, only afraid to let myself be touched by it.'

"One thing troubles me—it is why I find it so much more difficult to speak with those near to me by the tie of kinship, than I do to strangers. 'Why are the nearest sometimes the farthest apart?' Only sometimes, thank God—and after all, who knows how near our nearest may be in reality, even when no word is spoken. Influence does not need words, and influence is all the time going out from us whether we will or no, just as fragrance goes out from a flower. But this does not fully solve my difficulty.

"What openings out of mysteries there will be when we pass beyond the limits of mystery, on to where 'we shall know, even as we are known.'"

I will copy no more extracts from Honoria's letters, for it is time now for us to pass on to an experience when God led her no longer by sunshine, but by clouds.—But amid the clouds, she never forgot it was God, her Heavenly Father, who thus led; and so the clouds only hid the sunshine—they did not put it out.

VI.

JUST here we must return to the bygone for a brief space, for I have neglected to say, that not more than a day after Honoria's arrival at Flamboyante she had told her father of Prof. Stuart's love for her—a love to which her own heart responded.

Mr. Lambert had listened with a clouded brow, and as Honoria ceased speaking, he had gravely replied, "No, he could not consent to any formal engagement during the years that must pass before she came of a legal age to decide for herself." And he had added—if then she consented to wed this middle-aged Professor, it would be in open opposition to his will. He was kind, even affectionate, as he said all this, but Honoria's quick instinct told her he was not a man to be moved by any plea she might urge.

In his answer to Prof. Stuart's letter—which came by the same vessel that brought Honoria—Mr. Lambert had been even more stern and decided. He handed this reply to Honoria before mailing it—and bade her note the terms he had set to correspondence, which he limited to a semi-annual exchange of letters—and they were to be free from all sentiment and binding pledges.

Honoria had been trained to obedience—remember, her story dates long ago—and she had accepted without a word her father's verdict; for the time he had a right to control her; after that—and Honoria had smiled a heart smile, while the finger of one hand tenderly passed back and forth over the little ring she wore on the other.

She was loyal by nature, too, and she could wait and trust—she did not need a constant repetition of love.

Undoubtedly the being debarred from freedom of correspondence with Prof. Stuart, had led Honoria into writing more fully and frankly to Ambrose Warner than she would

otherwise have done. And in one of her first letters to him, she told with the open-heartedness of a true sister much the same story she had told her father—adding Mr. Lambert's decision, and her trust, and willingness to wait. And for then, and on during the waiting years, though her mind was often sorely perplexed by the conditions of her grandfather's will, she felt the promise given before she knew those conditions was a sacred promise, that only unworthiness on her part or Prof. Stuart's could annul.

Now I turn for a moment to Ambrose Warner. It was well he knew through Honoria's own telling the story of her heart, and that she never would be more to him than the dear sister she called herself.

For, knowing this, he manfully struggled, not to let the disappointment of hopes that had been dear as his life, darken that life—and he conquered.

During the year that followed Honoria's home-leaving, it so happened that Ambrose and Rachel often met. Naturally they were

attracted to one another—first, because of their mutual friendship for Honoria, and then by sympathy in many points of interest. And —to make a long story very brief—before the time for Honoria's return came, they were man and wife, and happy in a home of their own.

But it is not with them we have to do, only in so far as their lives touched our Honoria's, and these facts tell enough.

Three years! they look so endless in anticipation—so brief in retrospection; during them, Honoria's trustful love had never once failed. Hence she passed from sunshine into shadow with no preparation for what came, and her heart bowed before the simple fact, as a reed beneath stormful wind and beating rain; only, she did not spring back into happy trustfulness, as the reed up-springs when rain and wind are over and gone.

That she was Prof. Stuart's first and only love, somehow she had never questioned. She knew but little of human heart-stories,

Her life had been simple, and tenderly guarded, and from the remoteness of Harbor-town she had been shut away from society—while at school the days had been duplicates the one of another. Then, too, she was not given to intimate friendships—her grandparents and Ambrose Warner had sufficed till she knew Rachel—and then had come the affection for Prof. Stuart, that all suddenly she found was love.

After that, even in the midst of grief, a restful joyfulness had come into her heart; and parted as she and Prof. Stuart were so almost immediately—the poetry of love perchance crowded out the prose, and she never thought much of his early life. But had he told her at the very first,—even before he whispered his love for her,—that in the far-off days of his youth he had won and wed a Scotch maiden, fair as a lily and as fragile, Honoria would have accepted the truth with no more feeling, than the natural feeling all women have, that there is an added dearness in being first and only. Yes, she would have

accepted this, for she was entirely free from all bitterness and petty jealousy—I do not think it would have shadowed her happiness, except by a thought of tender regret for the early sorrow that had come to the man she loved—and a thought of tenderness, too, as she pictured the lonely grave in the distant Scotch kirkyard.

But not to have been told! How it hurt Honoria!—hurt her so keenly, that though she was wont to be gentle, and eager in seeking excuse for the faults of others, the power failed her for a time—and even forgiveness tarried, and was hard to attain.

It was her first experience in *un*-idealizing; and there are some souls to whom this is almost a sadder experience than actual loss. And Honoria Lambert's soul was one of these. The way, too, in which the knowledge came to her, made it all the harder. It was the harvest season on the coffee plantation, always a busy season for every dweller at Flamboyante. And Honoria, having by this time become only too familiar with her fa-

ther's lack of business rectitude, had assumed charge of certain details, in the matter of weight and estimate of value.

Many an hour she and her faithful little knight, Fergus, spent on the plantation—seeking, as the day advanced, the shelter of one or the other of the "Barbecues," as the natives called the houses which contained the threshing floors, and drying-rooms where the little berries were prepared for shipment to lands beyond the sea.

On the day of which I tell, the heat increased early, and two hours after sunrise Honoria and Fergus were sitting on the broad porch of the upper "Barbecue." Fergus had soon tired of threading the tiny red berries, that like tares among wheat, found their way among the perfect beans, and he laid his curly head on Honoria's knee, straightway falling into the peaceful sleep of childhood.

Honoria was weary too, and she pushed aside the account-book with its long lines of figures, while she leaned her head against the

vine-covered column that helped uphold the sheltering porch; and like the boy, she, too, closed her eyes; but her heart was wide awake, for she was thinking, only a month from that very day she would be "of age," free to love, and free to sail over the wide water, home, to the dear land of America.—And, the thought was like a song in her heart.——

A sudden movement on the part of the sleeping boy caused her to open her eyes, and with a touch gentle as a caress, she smoothed the hair back from the child's flushed face; as she did it her gaze rested on the ring Prof. Stuart had slipped on her finger so long ago—three years!—And then she lifted her hand to untwist from the golden circlet one of Fergus' long curls that had become entangled around it; and, for the first time she noticed it was a halved ring—and the boy's curl, one hair of it, had worked its way between the tight clasp of the two parts. So entangled had it become, that even though Honoria shivered as she did it, she was forced to slip

the ring from her finger. And, with one of those sudden impulses that we never can explain, she pressed her finger on the dividing line—and she held *two* rings, when she had thought there was but *one*.

And—yes—surely, surely—there were tiny letters traced on the slender golden circles.—"It was his mother's," softly she said—"it is a wedding ring"—and tenderly as she would have stooped to gather a flower from a grave, Honoria bent her head low as she sought to read the faintly traced names. But they were not the names she thought to find,—Anna Maxwell—Andrew Stuart. No, they were not the names of Andrew's parents.

After that, darkness came into Honoria's soul. Truly, she was as one mist-bewildered.——

So long were the intervals between out-going and in-coming mails, there on the Island of Jamaica, time counted weeks before Prof. Stuart's explanation came. When it did come, Honoria knew there need be no perplexing question about her grandfather's will. The

Harbor-town mansion would throw wide open its doors as a refuge for the sorrowing and the needy.

Meanwhile Honoria had gone through the daily routine of life without any outward change. She had smiled on the children. She had been bright and earnest in her efforts to make home a happy place to her father. She had readily responded to Mrs. Lambert's demands on her sympathy. And her interest in the plantation, and the deeper interest in the souls of the working people, was as warm and active as ever.

But though no mortal eye beheld it, Honoria struggled day and night with her own heart; she found forgiveness so hard,—not pardon, but forgiveness! The trial was so many-sided and subtle in the pain it brought her. She was too clear-sighted to escape the knowledge that truly she had been deceived. And Truth was something she held as dear as even her grandfather could have desired.

Reserve she respected, but Prof. Stuart's silence was not from reserve—she could not

shut her eyes to this ; she knew it was a weak lack of courage that had tempted him to withhold a knowledge that rightfully belonged to her. And the sense that he had used as a token of their plighted troth his dead wife's wedding-ring, made Honoria shiver, as though she had been wearing that which did not belong to her.—And she had.

To one of her sensitive nature, the mere fact, too, that Prof. Stuart could thus use the little ring was repellant. And her heart was all hurt and wounded like some tender bird blown by a rough wind out of its sheltering nest. And because she could not fully forgive,—the Light of God's love was dimmed for her ;—she knew that Love was unchanged, but for the time she was out of harmony with it.—In her journal she wrote :

" I have a little picture hanging on my wall, which is a type of myself these days. It is only a profile of a child's face, hence I can see but one side of it ; and so it is now with God's Love. I can see but one side of it, and that not the side that till now has made

my life beautiful as a dream.—But I am wrong, or that one side would satisfy me, for I know the *All* of Love is there, even though I may not see the same side of Love I am used to.

"Still I do not seem able to look up from this trial and see it as sent by a loving God. I *can* see that God is right in sending it. I can see that I may need the trial. And I can feel, too—oh! I do feel it—that God is love—but not in the darkness of the sorrow do I *see* that love. And yet, *feeling* is more than seeing—only I crave the comfort of sight, even though my Saviour's own words tell me, 'Blessed are they that have not *seen*, and yet have believed.'"

VII.

"O do you hear that Voice from Heaven?
'Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.'"

YES—Honoria heard and heard it; heard it when she went out, and when she came in. It whispered in the stirring of the wind among the palm-trees, it echoed in the song of the birds, and in the rhythmic ripple of the waves as the river sped onward to the sea. A river of peaceful flow as it wound in and out through the southern border of the plantation, though up among the hills where it found its rise it was a swift, turbulent stream.

The knowledge of this comforted Honoria those days, holding as it did a metaphor of peace, whispering, though life was tossing her about by rough tossings now, yet onward, afterward, there were green meadows through which still waters flowed, and by whose bank-

sides were rest and refreshment. But, when would she reach them?

You know how sometimes we see our very self, standing apart as it were, the soul brought out into clearly defined view. It was so with Honoria those days; her own hand seemed to turn the full focus of light on her own soul. This is not a frequent experience; which is well, for introspection is not what we any of us need so much as looking off and beyond self; and it was entirely new to Honoria, for her way had been to forget self. But she needed such discipline, for her Christian life had been thus far almost free from trial, and a sight of self involved the entering into the valley of humiliation; and the first shadow she met in that valley, demanded that she should learn what it is to in very truth forgive, when one has been sorely wounded.

It was part of her living a Gospel life, too, that she should thus encounter one of the first lessons taught in the Gospel. One of the first, I repeat, for in Luke's preface chapters we read of the Angels of "Peace and

Good-will," and surely there would have been no need for their blessed song had there been naught to forgive.

"Peace,—Good-will,"—verily they are the flowers of which forgiveness is the root. And yet, in the light of this, how slow we are wont to be in treading the path of forgiving freely and fully.

No wonder Honoria was troubled when she found her heart harsh in judgment, slow in forgiving. And out of the question, 'What is it to forgive?' another query blossomed, for all spiritual questions are, like fruit-bearing trees, progressive,—the bud first, then the blossom, and then the clustering fruit.

This latter query that came to Honoria was a very full one, for it asked, "What is it to be a Christian?" Her heart responded in the Bible words: "It is to have the same mind in you that was in Christ Jesus." And that answer, as she pondered it, expanded till her soul whispered a reply much like the words I copy from one of England's earnest thinkers: "It is to seek and to serve God in

the faith and hope which perfect Love creates, delivered from the fear which perfect Love casts out. It is to live in His presence, to watch for His victory, to know through the depth of our being, that a holy God who loves us must hold us responsible for our faithfulness to the quickening of His grace; it is to have the large bountifulness of heart, and when possible of hand, of Him who 'causeth His sun to shine on the evil and the good.' It is to have the most Christ-like ways, the surest, the sweetest, and the noblest; to make earthly life more and more truly worship in spirit and in truth, by loving and serving our Father in Heaven, and serving His children on earth." And all this can be, because Christ said, "I am the Vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, bringeth forth much fruit."

Ah! if we knew that real abiding in Christ, then we would have found the "Pearl of Price," even the San Grail! Then, we would have "the power of living and loving *outside* of ourselves, a power without which, so many lives remain failures in the highest sense."

"The same mind in you that was in Christ Jesus,"—thinking of *that mind* Honoria learned precious lessons those days, for when she saw her own soul in all its unlikeness to the Divine pattern, how could she condemn the weakness of another? Still though she recognized all this, there were subtle involvings in the trial that had come to her, that her power of forgiveness found it hard to encompass. She remembered the old saying, "Forgive and forget." But how could she forget that which had taken the joy out of her earthly life?

Then, too, she had not ceased to love because her ideal was destroyed—and yet, she felt Prof. Stuart could never be the same to her. Her friend, she would always call him, but he never could fill the place he had; that was past, all had changed, for she no longer could feel toward him the beautiful harmony of love without a discordant note.

Frankly she wrote Prof. Stuart all this, and before she ended her letter, she had come to the power and grace of forgiving. And then, her young dream of earthly happiness over,

she bravely took up life and its duties. Duties that thronged about her, leaving but little time for musing during the next six years.

So it happened, by what seemed a simple chain of circumstances, the conditions of Squire Lambert's will were fulfilled without Honoria's being involved in perplexing discussion, regarding the complexity of opposing duties. And through letters of directions to Judge Bruce and Ambrose Warner, she caused the door of the Harbor-town mansion to be opened wide, as her grandfather had wished, for a refuge for the poor and lonely.

"Do not call it Home," Squire Lambert had written, "for that means heart meeting heart, and how can Home be for the *Homeless?* No, let it be rather an outstretched Hand, a listening Ear, a kindly Eye—any term that holds the essence of shelter, protection, and tenderness." And Honoria, mindful of her grandfather's words, called it "The Open Door." But I anticipate in telling this now, for it took months before it was accomplished and in working order.

VIII.

COMING of age! the stepping from twenty on to twenty-one, a boundary no wider than that dividing yesterday from to-day, and yet how much it means.

Perchance dating from Honoria's own heart's stand-point she would have said it did not mean much to her, for the hour that marked life's first great sorrow, she called her coming of age. And in one sense, she was right, for surely it is the knowing trouble, that makes souls count age, far more than the calendar's reckoning of time. And yet, there are some hearts that never lose their youth, tossed though they may be from one trial on to another. In part this is a natural gift, but it is more wont to be faith's victory over suffering, the developing a new life, not out of the old, but out of trust and close following of Christ.

When this perpetual youth is thus a blossom of faith, then it is that human lives become Gospel lives, because the soul "looks on the world in its true light, not as a *home*, but as a *journey*"—looks, too, with so clear an insight into other hearts that the power of sympathy is deepened, and the truth recognized, that where trouble is, there is always a great need of tenderness. Honoria not only felt this need, but she gave the tenderness too.

On the morning of her twenty-first birthday, she wrote her dear friend, Rachel, a letter from which I will copy later on. It was a day that, according to her father's wish, was to be celebrated as a festive time, and Honoria had pleaded for a holiday for the plantation people as well as for the home servants, though for the latter there was but little holiday-keeping, in the sense of rest from labor, for the evening was to be observed by a brilliant party, that was to include not only the upper class of English residents in and about Port Royal and Kingston, but the officers and their families from both gar-

risons, and from the naval ships at anchor in the Bay.

Honoria was bright and full of interest in the pleasure her father thus desired to give her, even though it was not in harmony with her own taste; for from a child, she had always a sweet and ready grace in meeting and responding to any effort made for her enjoyment.

For months she had been busy preparing tokens of good-will for distribution that day, thinking when she began them, they would be farewell remembrances; but since the shadow of disappointment had fallen across her love for Prof. Stuart, her return to America had been indefinitely postponed. In truth the girl's heart somewhat shrank from the return that had been so longed for. And yet, as I said before, she did not let her own sadness over-gloom what was to others a happy time, and by sunrise she and Fergus were going in and out among the cabins of the natives, saying kind words, and leaving tangible gifts. A time of rest did not come

till the heat of the advancing day enforced it. It was then that she wrote Rachel:

"Do you remember," her letter began, "our first spring-time at the Academy? The memory of one day comes to me so vividly; it was early in May; listening to the song of the gay-plumaged Island birds this morning it all came back to me, and almost I seemed to hear again the song of our dear New England birds—the chorus made of blended notes, 'laughter of robins, call of meadow-larks, song of bobolinks, ditty of sparrows, whistle of orioles, and last, but not least, the twitter of the swallows.'

"A party of us girls had been up the hillside seeking the first May blossoms—and you carried in your hand a slender hazel twig you broke from a bush by the road-way, telling meanwhile why it was believed to have so marvellous a power of healing. A legend that pictured a wild storm, and the Virgin Mother fleeing into Egypt, holding the infant child safe in her loving arms, as she sought shelter from wind and rain beneath the over-

hanging branches of the thick-growing hazel bushes, since which it has been called a growth of healing virtues. A story that is a mere nothing in itself, but in the telling you made it much.

"We were all young girls, and as we talked, we added, after the fashion of youth, fancy to fancy, till one among the group asked, 'why on some of the tree-boughs, tufts of last year's leaves were left, yellow dry things, and yet their clasp firm enough to have withstood winter winds and storms?' In reply you said the clinging leaves always seemed to you a lesson in human history, for they so pictured selfish souls, that were unwilling to part with the blessings of one year till sure of the blossoms of another. But I said, I did not read the parable thus, neither do I now. Somehow it seems to me far more like a tenderness, unwilling to leave the opening buds unprotected, and thus clinging on, till the very buds they have sheltered push them off.

"It is an odd memory out of my mind's full treasure house, to come to me on this my

twenty-first birthday, yet, I can not put it by, for it comes freighted with the question, 'What is the meaning of dead leaves?' Just for myself I see the significance of the bough tufted with the dry leaves of a by-gone year.—I see—yes, I see.—I have come to a new era in my life, and now the buds of another spring must push off the dry leaves, and open out into new, fresh leafage.

"I never before fully realized this wonderful beauty of Tree emblems, never, even though years ago, my grandfather bade me remember the word Tree meant mind or intellect. I recall now how he traced the thought from its origin, giving me the Anglo-Saxon word etymologically linked with *Tree*. A word that we still keep in use when we say 'I trow'—meaning, I believe.

"But I must not linger over these thoughts, for tree emblems are boundless. I am so glad the thought of them has come to me as my birthday gift.—Ah! for a soul strong enough to mount by faith's uplifting to some top-most bough!

"Ah! if *now* and *here*

"We above all doubt might soar,
In air as crystal clear,
And every mystery explore,
And bring all distance near;

"And focus in one field of light
Truth's star-beams scattered wide!
And both the poles of life unite
Harmonious side by side!

But such sight is not for us, for

"'The smallest moss upon a stone,
Like writing on the wall,'
Can only be explained by *One*,
Though seen and read by all.

"While here, the wisest sage must live
By faith and not by sight;
For duty only, Heaven will give
Enough of guiding light.

"But when at last, from life's dark road,
We climb heaven's heights serene,
All light upon the hill of God
In God's light shall be seen.

"All kingdoms of the truth shall thus
To tearless eyes be shown:
And, dwelling in that purer air,
We'll know even as we're known."

IX.

I SAID Honoria's day began at sunrise, and truly it reached over well-nigh into the morrow, for when the last gay lingerer left Flamboyante, the glow of dawning was already tinting the cloud-banks, that like mountains, lay piled, one above the other, over toward the horizon.

The lights in the many-colored lamps that had made the garden and balconies a fairy place were beginning to burn low, too, while the flowers that festooned door and window frames were drooping, making the air heavy with that subtle fragrance that is never so strong as when flowers are drawing near their fading time.—And all was still, with that peculiar hush, unlike other stillness, that prefaces as a sacred benediction the dawning of a new day.

It is no wonder that this dawning hour is

the one of all the twenty-four in which souls are most wont to pass from earth to Heaven, for it is a time when the Unseen seems so near. Neither is it any wonder that even dull minds acknowledge that it holds the same relation to the day that the pure heart holds toward spiritual sight. The deep undertone of its holy meaning coming out of the very hush and infinite stillness, that like the spirit of repose, is a foretaste of the rest Beyond.

It was but a few minutes Honoria thus pondered, for her father joined her almost immediately after the last guest-laden carriage rolled away, and then they stood together on the threshold of the open door.

Honoria's intercourse with her father during the years since she came to the Island home, had been much like the in-coming and out-going tide,—sometimes their hearts had come close, the one to the other, and then drifted apart again. And the apart times had been the most frequent, for contradictory as it seems, there is nothing so apt to keep

members of the same household apart as the receiving benefits one from another, that according to common acceptance involve obligation. Emerson puts it sharply, and yet his very sharpness holds a sad truth: "It is a great happiness to get off without heart-burning from those who have been served by you." It is thus he writes, and while I call the words an exaggerated statement, nevertheless it was something of Mr. Lambert's feeling toward Honoria, for he was almost vexed that she had rendered the aid he had so needed.

But one reason for this was, he well knew he had trespassed on that aid, and that more than once Honoria had signed papers that meant larger amounts than she had supposed. And now the settling time had come.

"Why wait for to-morrow, why not have the explanation over that very hour,"—it was thus he said to himself as he joined her.

She met him with a smile, linking her arm in his, and straightway yielded to his request to come to his study, and receive the papers

that had to do with the relinquishment of his stewardship of the amounts entrusted to his care during the years of her minority.

Honoria felt no fear regarding this settlement—indeed it was long before she understood. True herself, how could she look for untruth in another?

What passed between father and daughter during that hour neither ever told—and silence was better.—Only this much Mrs. Lambert knew; after it a change came, not only over Honoria, but over Ralph Lambert also. What the change was, she could hardly define, certainly it was no lessening of Honoria's loveliness, and yet something had gone from her fair face, but something had come into it too.

The truth was, she had been led into the shadow of evil; and after the knowledge of the darkness of wrong doing, the world never can be the same again. It happened in this way: her father, brought face to face with his young, true-souled daughter, saw his own far wandering from the true and good as

he never had seen it before, and with less reserve than perchance he realized, he told of his past. And she heard every word—and then, she strove to help him out of the darkness into the light.

A girl's influence!—it seemed such a little thing in comparison with the evil against which it had to contend; but a stalk of wheat is a little thing, and yet the slender stalk holds seed-grains that contain food for hundreds!

That Ralph Lambert made slow progress in the new and better life on which he resolved that hour, is not to be wondered at—so slow, that six years went by, before Honoria felt the time had come when with safety she could leave her father, and return to Harbor-town. For so often during those years he had weakly yielded to temptation and slipped back again into the old paths—but she had never wearied praying for him, and the knowledge of this was like a hand out-reached to a drowning man, it guided him back to the safe haven again and again. And then—at last—he prayed for himself—

only stammeringly at first, but God does not count words. No, God counts desire.——

Meanwhile Honoria hardly realized how close all this experience was leading her into the fellowship of Christ's suffering. For there is no sorrow that leads so near to Christ as the sorrowing for those we love who do wrong—"for *that* is pre-eminently the affliction of Jesus Christ Himself, and in nothing does He more deeply sympathize with us."

During these years Fergus had passed out of childhood; he was a lad now of fifteen, and for his sake it seemed best that Honoria should return to the home land—and so she came to her last Sabbath on the Island. She had had but little time during those busy years to think of the old legend she had loved so well in her girlhood, and yet how truly had she found the treasure she had sought!

It was early morning when she and her father, Mrs. Lambert, and Fergus entered the parish church—an old-fashioned building with little of artistic grace, but made sacred by consecration, and by the ages during which

its walls had echoed to the blessed words of England's 'Mother Church.'——

Infinite peace rested over land and sea that Sabbath; a gentle breeze stole in through the wide-open windows, filling the old church with the sweet air of early morning, while each window was a frame for some wondrous glimpse of nature's beauty. But it was not the outward that stirred Honoria's soul, for it was the sacramental Sabbath. The altar, a plain wooden table, centuries old, lay spread with the snow-white linen, and the holy emblems—there were flowers there, too.

Hand in hand, Honoria and her father, close followed by Fergus and his mother, passed up the long aisle, up to the altar railing, where side by side they knelt on the worn slab, where in lowly following of the Christ, the faithful had knelt year after year. And into their hands they took the cup of blessing, the worn silver of "the Grail," as the Island Bishop called the chalice. He said but few words, but it was tenderly significant to Honoria that those few were in-

wrought with the spiritual meaning of the Grail; and then, simply as though he were speaking to little children, the good Bishop lifted their thoughts to the peculiar character of the "Communion Service," bidding them remember, it was "not merely union with Christ, but with friends *in Christ*," and so, though they might never again kneel side by side at the Lord's table, yet always, no matter how far separated they were by earthly miles, their hearts would beat in unison, when they went apart to "do this in remembrance of Him," so true it is that spiritual things are spiritually discerned.

This was Honoria's blessing for that Sabbath morning.—It was twilight when another blessing came to her.—Twilight, when a little company sought her from among the plantation people and house servants, dark-skinned men and women, with hands toil-hardened, men and women used to the bondage of enforced servitude all their lives, nevertheless free men and women now, for she had told them of Christ.

Tell me—did not the rendering of such service, leading from the slavedom of sin into the freedom that walks at liberty because God's laws are kept, make her life a Gospel? If you seek by *doing* to find the answer to my question, then the blessing that came to Honoria Lambert will come to you, too, for you will learn as she did,—

"The rugged rock oft holds within its bosom
Deep hidden, a fount of sweet and living water,
That needs but the soft power of some meet influence
To call it gushing forth:—thus, too, the heart
Of many a rough, neglected child of labour,
When gently touched by the mild words of kindness,
Is found to be a source whence flow all plenteously,
Trust, gratefulness, and truth, and the sweet sympathies
That make men loved and lovely."

X.

"EACH has in his own life prophetic, seer-like moments of joy and sorrow, and noble insight, and to trust them is to live nobly and think safely."

Do you believe this?—Certain it is there come to us all moments of clear vision, Mount Pisgah hours!

Dividing periods come to us, too, from which we gaze on the path we have trod, and off and on to that by which we are to go. Periods that separate one part of our life from the other as completely as a hill separates a stretch of land, revealing on one side a sandy desert, while the other opens out toward meadows rich in verdure, and through which gliding water-brooks run on their peaceful course.

These intense hours of life always are our most individual hours, bounded as they are

by the words of the Book which tell us "the heart knoweth its own."—And we all interpret life according to what it means to us individually, and just "as it demands the poet to detect poetic beauty, the artist eye to see art beauty," just as "we can not know light through the demonstrations of the astronomer," but through seeing, "so we can only know life by living, so too, God can not manifest Himself to a soul whose spiritual eye is tight shut any more than the sun can shine into a blind man's eyes."

But Honoria Lambert's spiritual eyes were never closed, hence she beheld God in all, even the most bewildering experiences life had held for her. And the days of her homeward voyage she dwelt much on what God had brought her since she sailed away from the shore to which now she was returning. She dealt with her experiences much as an artist does with the varied sketches made from time to time during a sojourn in a foreign country, holding up for her soul to gaze on, now a sunlight view, now a shadowed; now a moun-

tain peak, and now a valley, and every one filled a place of its own, for to the earnest-hearted every event fills a page of life's full lesson book. For what is life but school time? What are we but slow learners?—and yet,

> "Let knowledge grow from more to more,
> But more of reverence in us dwell."

Honoria found it easy to trace God's Hand in the great events that had stirred her heart, but not so easy when she strove to thus regard the seemingly trifling. And it was the "little things" she wanted to uplift, for it was the doing "common things religiously," the "sanctifying daily life," that she desired to attain. And she knew before she attained it, she must adjust not only *one*, but *all* the events of her by-gone, finding in them the prelude needed for the new life opening out before her. A life that held grave responsibilities, and much of service, as she had decided to immediately assume the care of the Harbor-town refuge. All that charge involved, half frightened her, for she knew

the living *out* plans is all unlike the making them. Over and over she repeated Faith's stronghold words—"Fear thou not, for I am with thee," and repeating them her soul found peace, fears vanished.

Perhaps the thing she had dreaded most was the meeting Prof. Stuart, but before the vessel reached its mooring even that dread was calmed. She had come to realize that it was not the impossible thing she had thought, when first her sorrow dawned, for the heart to love without full completeness of sympathy. But she felt, too, such a friendship could not end in marriage according to her high ideal of married love, which had not grown less as her years increased.—For, firmly she believed such a love required a oneness of heart for its foundation, cemented by truth of principle, and faithfulness of trust, and when one has found this lacking,

> "Can it be wisdom to forget
> What wisdom taught us yesterday?"

Honoria knew it was not, but still she remembered the blessed part of a one-sided

friendship is the power of elevating the weak!

Fond as she had always been of metaphor, she could not fail to recall her arrival at Jamaica, and contrast with it the day of her return. Then, she had arrived in the early morning; at sunrise the ship had found anchorage, a golden flood of light resting on sea and shore; but on this return voyage it was twilight when the shore was reached. The day had been dreary—gray, leaden clouds hiding the blue sky from dawn on to sunset. Not even a star glint shone through, as holding Fergus' hand in hers, they looked across the narrowing stretch of water to where lights were beginning to shine from the homes in the city.

It was a scene of confusion. Vessels crowded the Harbor from world-wide ports, but the skillful pilot guided with unerring eye the in-coming ship to its pier.—And then, a minute later, Ambrose Warner held Honoria's hand in his; words of greeting were exchanged; they met as they had

parted, friends, dear as brother and sister, and clinging to his strong arm with one hand, while with the other she held Fergus in a tight clasp, Honoria Lambert bade farewell to captain and crew, and stepped once again on the familiar land of this Western Continent. And then followed a swift drive to Judge Bruce's hospitable home, a cordial welcome, and the next day a speedy departure for Harbor-town.

Of Honoria's meeting with Prof. Stuart I find no record; but that they did meet often during the years that followed, I know from what Rachel has told me.—Rachel, a wife and mother!—this seemed strange to Honoria, but her gladness in her friend's gladness was without a shadow, so warmly she rejoiced in it, believing as she did, a woman's life is never so complete and happy as when she faithfully fills this highest mission. Strange, too, it seemed to meet as well-nigh middle-aged women when they had parted as young girls.—But there were no bridges to cross in

Rachel and Honoria's friendship, for they had never grown apart, or been divided in sympathy.

Many another strange experience greeted Honoria, for age and time had wrought many a change in Harbor-town. Graves had been made in the Hill-side burial-place; homes left desolate. New homes had sprung up too, new lives had opened, and in all changes, whether of sorrow or of joy, her heart tenderly sympathized. So she straightway found her place, and entered on a Gospel life again.

XI.

"ALL the same, and yet all so changed." —It was thus Honoria thought as she and Fergus stood together on the porch of the Harbor-town mansion. Nature was all as when she left; the garden borders were bright with the familiar summer flowers; the sea waves came rippling up on the sandy beach with the same sweet music.—But, when once she crossed the threshold and entered her home, for a little while it was hard; for unknown faces met her at every turn; weary, sad-eyed women, and little children whose countenances told of want and early suffering.

Then, too, the aforetime spacious rooms in many cases had been divided, and the whole atmosphere of the mansion no longer breathed of home, but gave one the sense that it was a place supported by a beneficiary fund.

This Honoria speedily changed, for when she came, Love came too.—And yet, it was no easy task; often her heart failed her, and she was kept very humble in her own sight, for she found, as many another Christian worker has done, "that the spirit of work is much easier to obtain, than submission"; she found it much easier to say, "Lord, I will do," than to say, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

A great longing, too, often filled her heart, for the happy by-gone time, and the dear companionship of her grandparents. But the responsibilities of the present gave little opportunity for backward looks, and it was in the present she strove to live, doing the work God sent simply and quietly, striving not to feel overwhelmed with it; striving, too, to remember that while to herself she seemed all unfit for it, "God had given her the work to do, hence He would give her the needful strength and wisdom."

The thus trying to keep self out of sight held one great secret of Honoria's success, for

it made her simple and natural, and kept clear her power to discern that "right is right, and wrong is wrong." In truth, her life was enfolded in a spirit of willingness to leave results with God, and so she met daily duties calmly and trustfully, her key-note of service, "prayer,"—and her watchward, "Go forward."

And now, there is no need to tell in detail more of Honoria Lambert's Gospel life—for you know its source. And yet, because it tells it so well I copy prayer-full lines, that I beg you read, as though you were hearkening to her own voice speaking from her own soul, for I think they hold the spirit of Honoria's daily prayer; certain I am they reflect her daily life:

"I ask Thee for a thoughtful love,
Through constant watching, wise,
To meet the glad with joyful smiles,
And to wipe the weeping eyes—
And a heart at leisure from itself,
To soothe and sympathize.

"Wherever in the world I am,
In whatsoe'er estate,
I have a fellowship with hearts,
To keep and cultivate,
And a work of lowly love to do,
For the Lord on whom I wait."

XII.

"To-day looks back on yesterday,
Life's yesterday, the waiting time the dawn,
And reads a meaning in it, unknown,
When it was with us."

YES—we have come now to the parting place, you and I, who, hand in hand,—verily I would fain believe heart to heart, too,—have followed the outline story of how Honoria Lambert lived a Gospel life. A simple story, that is like some mountain range that rests in even line against the sky, unbroken by lofty peak, or clefted gorge; and yet, Honoria's life holds a high lesson for you, and for me. For, surely it hints that we may live, as she did, a Gospel life, if we cling close to the Christ, walking in the light of His guidance, and doing His will,—His will!—"this is the will of God even our sanctification," and the stepping-stone to this sanctification

is found when our hearts can say, "Thy will, not mine, be done."

Can your heart thus say?—

When we seek in this spirit of submission, then we will find the precious thing life holds for us each and every one—even our San Grail. And what matter if the way to the supreme moment of life, when God's will becomes our will, be a rough path, up-hill all the way? What matter if we tread it foot-sore and weary now,—the end is sure—and, God knows the way we take—hence what matter if the service He bids us render be lowly service? What matter if our task be naught more than the speaking a word of cheer to a weary heart? the meeting smiles with smiles, tears with tears? or the extending a hand of sympathy—the showing tenderness, and longing to help those who have wandered far from the right, back again, out of darkness to light, from evil to good.

Humble services all of them—and yet remember they are inwrought with the truth that

"To love is more than to be loved, by leave
Of Heaven, to give is more than to receive."

So go on your way, just doing the little deeds of kindliness and you will find

"The Grail of blessings,
An earthly sweetness forth will fling."

For,

"To it is power unearthly given,
Such as one knows is born of Heaven."

Yes—the Holy Grail, this treasure most precious, surely it is "the pearl of great price"—Love.

What pearl so blessed as the pearl of loving service rendered for Christ's sake, the being blessed by God with power to inspire others, to help make life purer, truer, loftier, calmer, brighter?

The Holy Grail. Yes, I repeat surely it is *Love*—and whosoever findeth the Heavenly Love, findeth God.

'Fountain of Love! Thyself true God!
.
Ocean, wide-flowing ocean, Thou,
.

Thou art a sea without a shore,

.

A sea which can contract itself
Within my narrow heart.

.

A harbor that can hold full well
Shipwrecked humanity.
O Light! O Love! O very God!
My heart is fit to break
With love of all Thy tenderness
For us poor sinners' sake.

.

My comfort, this shall be,
That, when I serve my dearest Lord,
My service worships Thee!"

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